BLACK PANTHER PARTY 43RD ANNIVERSARY EVENTS (See page 3)

COMMEMORATOR

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Honoring Li'l Bobby Hutton's Legacy, Community Demand Grows for End to Police Brutality

Photo by Dave Id/Indymedia

Emory Douglas, revolutionary artist and former BPP Minister of Culture, recalls Li'l Bobby Hutton's commitment to BPP goals.

On April 11, celebrants gathered at the West Oakland Library to honor the legacy, passion and commitment of Li'l Bobby Hutton, and to call for that legacy to take material forms through memorial projects and a renewed community demand for an end to the police brutality rampant against the poor and people of color today.

"We need economic and political policies that will rid our communities of the poverty-induced strife they now suffer," explained Melvin Dickson, Chair of Commemoration Committee for the Black Panther Party (CCBPP). Participants demanded an end to the circumstances that led to the police murders of Li'l Bobby Hutton in 1968 and Oscar Grant III 40 years later at the close of 2008, in the wee hours of New Year's Day. Control by and for the people over the means of survival is fundamental to elimination of violence of all kinds, including police brutality, which throughout history has been a means of suppressing unrest among the poor.

Li'l Bobby Hutton was the first member of the Black Panther Party, recruited by Panther co-founders Dr. Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale when Li'l Bobby was 15 years of age. He was murdered just one week before his 18th birthday — and three days after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. A contingent of over 40 Oakland police officers shot Li'l Bobby 12 times as he stood, shirtless, in floodlights, with his hands in the air, in the act of surrendering.

CCBPP Chair Dickson recounted that Dr. King was murdered in Memphis, Tennessee when he was speaking out not only against racism in

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In Memoriam Richard Masato Aoki — 1938 to 2009

Richard Masato Aoki, Black Panther Party founding member and Field Marshal, longtime Bay Area political activist, groundbreaking educator in Asian-American ethnic studies, co-founder of Third World Liberation Front and a loyal comrade to the end, died of complications from kidney failure on March 15 at the age of 70.

Born in 1938 in San Leandro, California, Richard learned early about the impact of imperialist wars and institutional racialism in the U.S. At age four, Richard and his family were arrested and incarcerated in a concentration camp for Americans of Japanese ancestry in Topaz, Utah. They were forced to remain in the internment camp for three years, not being released until the end of WWII, penalized for something that neither his family nor any one else in the camp had had anything to do with — the Japanese government attack on Pearl Harbor of December 7, 1941.

Richard's family moved to West Oakland in the 1950's and then to Berkeley where he attended Berkeley High School. Upon graduating in 1957, he served eight years in the U.S. Army and was honorably discharged in 1964.

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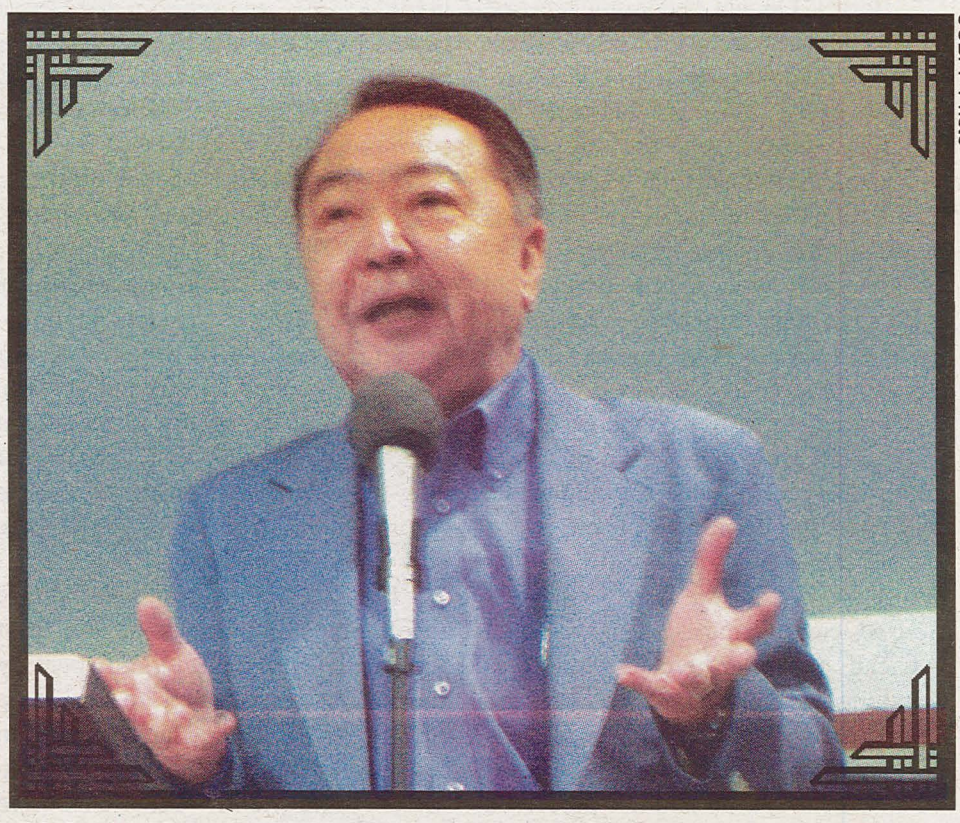

CCBPP Photo

Richard Masato Aoki, a passionate fighter for the oppressed and exploited masses was a founding member and a Field Marshal of the Black Panther Party.

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EDITORIAL

Let Our New President Heed Dr. King's & the BPP's Positions on Ending Poverty in the United States

"Up to recently we have proceeded from a premise that poverty is a consequence of multiple evils... At no time has a total, coordinated and fully adequate program been conceived. As a consequence, fragmentary and spasmodic reforms have failed to reach down to the profoundest needs of the poor....

I am now convinced that the simplest approach will prove to be the most effective — the solution to poverty is to abolish it directly by a now widely discussed measure: the guaranteed income. The problem indicates that our emphasis must be two-fold. We must create full employment or we must create incomes. People must be made consumers by one method or the other. Once they are placed in this position, we need to be concerned that the potential of the individual is not wasted. New forms of work that enhance the social good will have to be devised for those for whom traditional jobs are not available."

— Where Do We Go From Here, Chaos or Community. *Martin Luther King, Jr., New York, Harper & Row, 1967*

WE WANT FULL EMPLOYMENT FOR OUR PEOPLE. *We believe that the federal government is responsible and obligated to give every person employment or a guaranteed income. We believe that if the American businessmen will not give full employment, then the technology and means of production should be taken from the businessmen and placed in the community so that the people of the community can organize and employ all its people and give a high standard of living.*

— Point 2, Black Panther Party Ten-Point Program

Barack Obama becoming the first black American to be elected President of the United States is a great achievement worthy of acknowledgment by the entire country and the rest of the world, as the office of the President of the United States carries enormous political clout internationally.

We must be vigilant to ensure that such high achievement does not cause us to sit back and wait, resting on hope for promised change to come.

Rather, we must step up our organizing work now, to build the means to bring into reality what the neglected, exploited and oppressed people of the United States need.

A scene from the film, *Dry White Season,* comes to mind: a black South African anti-apartheid organizer is speaking to his white South African liberal supporter — the latter is gaining a political education in the realities of apartheid that he had not perceived of before, despite the problems existing in his own backyard. When the liberal expressed "hope" that the local South African court would rule in favor of justice for a black man who had been tortured and then murdered by police while held in custody, the black anti-apartheid organizer says: "Hope... is a white man's word." Here I mean "white" not so much as the color of one's skin, but as a frame of mind, rooted in one's class origins.

We cannot rely on hope without doing the material work to develop the political strength of the people themselves, fighting for the long-awaited, long-promised justice of which we have been robbed.

Within our neglected communities of people of color, we find over 50% of the black community living below the poverty line, with their backs to a wall. Solutions must address what our African American and other struggling people of the United States need, from the poorest and most exploited on up. Solutions must be well thought out, and not pit one grouping of poor and oppressed people against another.

And, we must not put nationalistic goals above the needs of working people of other nations.

This was a close presidential election up through the conventions — it seemed candidate Obama gained momentum last September when the stock market crashed and Congress approved a $700 billion bailout of the finance industry. His lead increased as people's retirement funds disappeared and as the American workforce suffered yet another round of job losses.

Today, more Americans each day are reeling from home and credit card foreclosures. There has been no relief in the offing for homeowners — over a million American families have lost their homes this year alone.

By now, chances are you know someone personally who has lost a home, a job — any sense of stability or future. Or you know someone accepting a diagnosis of depression and prescription drugs to try to overcome their psychological pain.

The mass media and pop culture is full of distractions and sensationalism... another way to quell unrest.

A poet once said: "Revolution is an aspirin, as big as the sun." Our people do not need to be drugged or distracted into a stupor; we need material solutions and the ability to be part of achieving solutions that are in our long-term interest — that will be our "aspirin," our true relief from these very troubled times.

The figures in the news are absolutely mind-boggling: the first 50% of the first $250 billion spent by the federal government to invest in keeping the financial institutions in business was disbursed as payments to shareholders and for executive compensation. Billions more have been poured into the insurance industry, auto

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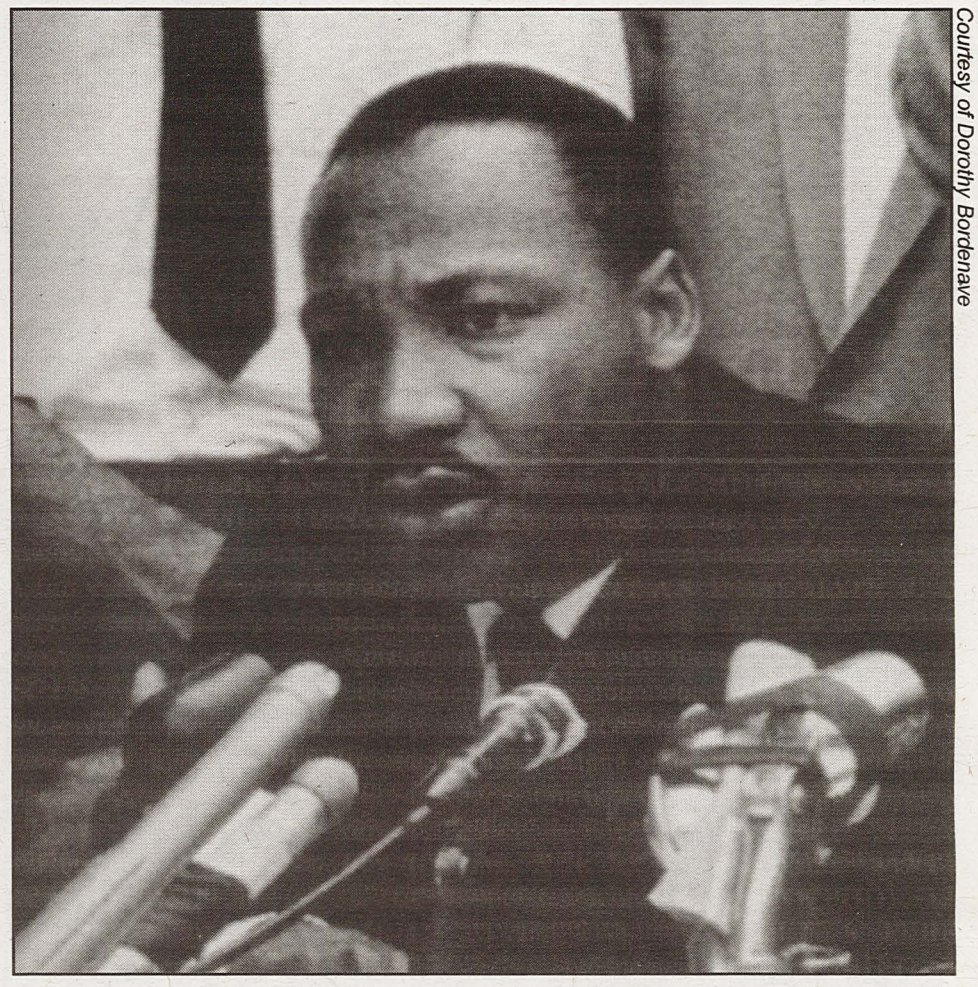

Courtesy of Dorothy Bordenave

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. proposed that "a guaranteed living income would reverse the devastation and set a precedent for the world."

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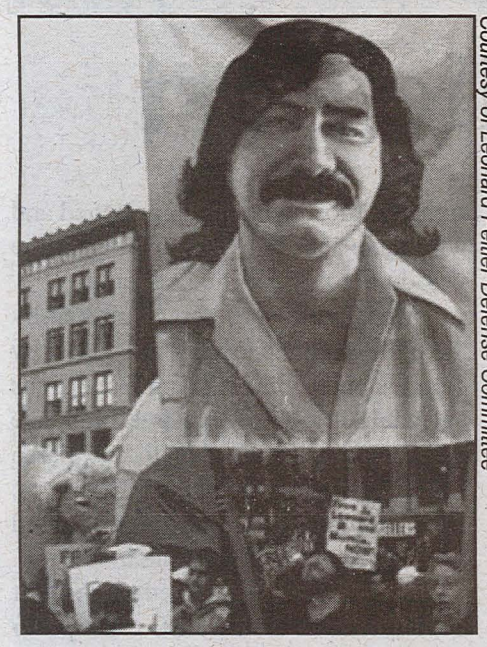
Peltier Denied Parole



Courtesy of Leonard Peltier Defense Committee

Supporters demanding release of Leonard Peltier.

Editor's note: At Leonard Peltier's recent parole hearing, convened in July 2009 at the Canaan Federal Penitentiary in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania where he is currently held, Peltier spoke for more than an hour "with great eloquence about the nature of his case, his imprisonment and his plans for freedom," stated Eric Seitz, Peltier's Honolulu-based attorney. However, in August, federal officials not only denied Peltier's bid for freedom, but put off his next possible parole hearing for another 15 years, when Leonard would be just shy of 80-years old!

Betty Peltier-Solano, Leonard's sister and Executive Coordinator of the Leonard Peltier Defense Committee, wrote in January of a brutal beating Peltier had suffered upon his transfer to Canaan. She said, "We feel that prison authorities at the prompting of the FBI orchestrated this attack and thus, we are greatly concerned about his safety. It may be that the attackers, whom Leonard did not even know, were offered reduced sentences for carrying out this heinous assault. Since Leonard is up for parole soon, this could be a conspiracy to discredit a model prisoner. He was placed in solitary confinement and only given one meal; this is generally done when you won't name your attackers. Incidentally, being only given one meal seriously jeopardizes his health because of his diabetes. Prison officials refuse to release any info to the family, but they need to hear from his supporters to protect his safety, as does President Obama."

The following is a press release from Eric Seitz, Esq. issued August 21, 2009 in response to the U.S. Parole Commission's decision to deny parole.

The Bush Administration holdovers on the U.S. Parole Commission today [August 21, 2009] adopted the position of the FBI that anyone who may be implicated in the killings of its agents should never be paroled and should be left to die in prison.

Despite judicial determinations that the unrepentant FBI fabricated evidence and presented perjured testimony in Leonard Peltier's prosecution; despite a jury's acquittal on grounds of self-defense of two co-defendants who were found to have engaged in the same conduct of which Mr. Peltier was convicted; despite Mr. Peltier's exemplary record during his incarceration for more than 33 years and his clearly demonstrated eligibility for parole; despite letters and petitions calling for his release submitted by millions of people in this country and around the world including one of the judges who ruled on his earlier appeals; and despite his advanced age and deteriorating health, the Parole Commission today informed Mr. Peltier that his "release on parole would depreciate the seriousness of your offenses and would promote disrespect for the law," and set a reconsideration hearing in July 2024.

This is the extreme action of the same law enforcement community that brought us the indefinite

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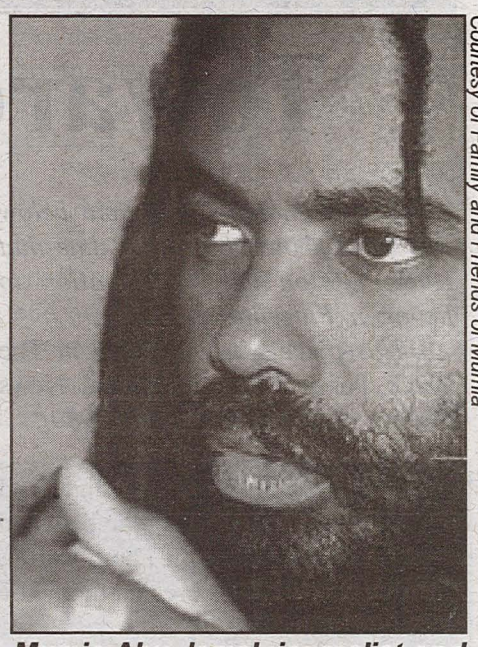
The Fallen

By Mumia Abu-Jamal



Courtesy of Family and Friends of Mumia

Mumia Abu-Jamal, journalist and political prisoner.

A nation's economy is always a work of complexity, which accounts for the divergent opinions of economists, who often come down on different sides of the big issues, as in what works, and what doesn't.

Broadly speaking, the conflict is between classic and Keynesian economics, with the former of the view that the market is self-regulating, and the latter of the view that the market isn't self-regulating, but must be massaged and managed by government fiscal policies.

The latest stimulus package is Keynesian (after British economist John Maynard Keynes [1883-1946]), as was the bailout of the banks and financial institutions.

It seeks to influence events by an aggressive expansionist fiscal policy.

But it seems like this is less stimulus than stopgap, for it seeks to stimulate something that is in almost deadly shape.

Look at it this way; if your heart stops, and you are given a powerful jolt of electricity, your heart may resume beating, but the problem is hardly solved.

You don't need a defibrillator unless the body (the system) is in an advanced state of collapse. And it's that state of serious illness that isn't being seriously addressed, for the American economy has been ill for quite some time.

Much can be traced to the NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) era, which sought to emphatically transform the economy to one run on information and financial services, with the manufacturing to be exported to foreign markets where labor was cheaper.

Unfortunately, no serious educational efforts were undertaken to adjust to this dramatic economic shift, and instead, a decade was wasted on largely irrelevant battles over No Child Left Behind, when millions of children experienced school as a test-taking prison, instead of a site of substantive learning.

With manufacturing hollowed out, and real wages falling annually, how could the economy not have a massive seizure?

For, of all the money roaring through the U.S. economy, over 70% is from personal consumption of goods and services, which means the economy is consumer-driven.

Let us illustrate; the U.S. GDP (Gross Domestic Product) for 2006 was over $13 trillion. Personal consumption of goods and services came to over $9 trillion.

The net effect of joblessness and lowered wages is a hit at the heart of the economy, that $750 billion could hardly touch.

Until the fundamentals can be recognized and corrected, these problems will continue, and the economy will sputter along, until the next heart attack.

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(Column written 2/12/2009)

Editor's note: For update on Mumia's legal case, see page 7.

BLACK PANTHER PARTY 43RD ANNIVERSARY

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OCT 17TH, 2009
FILM FESTIVAL AT WEST OAKLAND LIBRARY

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FILM FESTIVAL, SPEAKERS AND MUSIC AT LANEY COLLEGE

NIGHT OF OCT 24TH, 2009
BOBBY SEALE BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION AT EASTSIDE ARTS

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Archives

Toward Peace in the Middle East

Editor's note: The article below was written in 1980 at the time that Huey Newton led a delegation to Lebanon, Palestine and Israel.

This piece was published in The Black Panther Intercommunal News Service *(Vol. XX, No. 7 July 1980).*

Unless there is an immediate and peaceful solution to the war between the Palestinian people and Israel, World War III may break out in the Middle East.

A strong plea for peace in the Middle East was made by Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Chairman Yasir Arafat to Black Panther Party President Huey P. Newton during his recent visit to Lebanon, Jordan and Israel.

Huey believes that the PLO would accept the following solutions to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: (1) creation of a nonreligious state in which Palestinians and Israelis would live together or (2) creation of an autonomous and sovereign state for the Palestinians.

Due to the long history and the severity of the Middle East conflict, Huey believes that the only viable solution will be the creation of a separate entity for the Palestinians.

Huey asked Arafat if the Palestinians would be able to live peacefully with the Jews given the severe repression the Palestinians have suffered from the Zionist government. "We are all Semitic people. We are not against the Jews," Arafat replied.

Jewish leaders in America have publicly criticized Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin's political policies. A statement issued in early July by 56 U.S. Jewish leaders called for "peace and security through territorial compromise on the West Bank." That statement, which was drafted by the Israeli organization Peace Now and signed by 250 Israelis, further said that "extremism in the public and within the government, guided by secular and religious chauvinism, distorts Zionism and threatens its realization."

A spokesperson for the Jewish group said it was compelled to publicly attack the Begin government because the Israeli prime minister was falsely attempting to portray U.S. Jews as supportive of his policies.

Earlier this month, the United Nations Security Council reaffirmed its demand that Israel withdraw from captured Palestinian lands and denounced a plan to make occupied East Jerusalem part of a unified Israeli capital. The U.S. abstained from the action, which came in a resolution adopted by a vote of 14 to 0.

The resolution condemned "the persistence of Israel in changing the physical character, demographic composition, institutional structure and the status of the holy city of Jerusalem." It added that efforts to formally consolidate Jerusalem under Israeli rule "constitute a serious obstruction to achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East."

The Israeli government has come under increasing criticism from the Security Council in recent months. Earlier this year, the Begin government was censured four times in less than three months. In one case, the action was taken because Israel refused to readmit three Palestinian leaders who had been illegally deported from the occupied West Bank. The U.S. abstained from voting.

On April 30, America vetoed a Security Council resolution affirming the Palestinians' right to statehood. Ten Security Council members voted in favor of the resolution while Britain, France, Norway and Portugal abstained. Commenting on the U.S. veto, Farouk Kaddoumi, head of the political department of the PLO, said: "The U.S. is the main obstacle in the way of peace in the Middle East.... We hold it responsible because its neglect of Palestinian national rights, and because it continues to block any attempt by any state or by the Security Council to reach a just solution."

U.S. military and economic support of the Israeli government has increased significantly in recent years – supporting the PLO charges (that the U.S.) has been the primary reason for the escalation of the Middle East war. Fahd Qawasmeh, mayor of Hebron who was deported to Lebanon from the West Bank in May, said that the U.S. government has given Israel three billion dollars to build settlements on Palestinian land.

"The United States says that the Palestinians must get their human rights and at the same time the U.S. gives Israel the bombs, rockets and airplanes to kill our population," Qawasmeh said. "The U.S. is speaking about peace, but it is calculating war. It knows how to wage war. The U.S. will never accept a Palestinian state," he added.

Huey saw evidence of American aid to Israel when he visited the Rashadiya camps in Tyre, Lebanon, located eight miles from the Israeli border. Rashadiya is frequently bombed by Israel, and Huey saw bombs stamped "U.S."

In Beirut, Lebanon, Huey visited a Palestinian school, the Red Crescent Society Hospital, which provides low-cost medical and health care services, the Palestine Martyrs Works Society (SAMED), which is the economic unit of the PLO, and several factories.

Samoud School is run by the General Union of Palestinian Women. It was opened in 1976 to educate and care for the children of men and women killed after the town of Tal al-Zatar was bombed. There are 150 children in the school, and they are divided into groups of eight cared for by one woman who acts as their new mother. The children attend classes in the PLO camps where they learn reading and writing, and are tutored and take political education, dance, art and other classes at the school. A doctor and a nurse handle the children's health care problems.

The Red Crescent Society, founded by the PLO in 1969, operates 100 clinics and 13 hospitals and provides emergency health care services. The Society, which has 200 doctors in Lebanon alone, serves Palestinian and Lebanese people. It is funded by the Lebanese government, the United Nations' World Health Organization, and public and private donations. While all other hospitals in Lebanon charge high prices, the Society only requires a small payment and only if a patient can afford to pay. Families of fighters, those who are imprisoned and who have lost family members in the war do not pay for medical care.

Most health problems suffered by the Palestinian people are caused by wounds, unsanitary living conditions and malnutrition. There is a high rate of premature births due to the harsh living conditions in the PLO camps. Birth control is not encouraged because so many people die in the war.

Staff from the Red Crescent Society travel to the PLO camps to teach preventative medicine. The Society's work has been so successful that a major outbreak of cholera in Lebanon last year did not affect people in the camps.

The Society also operates first-aid classes, a three-year nurses' program and a dental school.

The Palestine Martyrs Works Society, known as SAMED, was formed in 1970 to provide economic support for children of men and women killed in the war. SAMED assists people living in the PLO camps to find work. Some 3,500 workers are employed in SAMED's seven clothing factories. In addition to clothes, workers make blankets, uniforms, boots, shoes, furniture and can food.

SAMED operates a small film making group which has produced a movie about the struggle of the Palestinian people called *The Key*. Over 100 Palestinians have been sent from Lebanon to other countries to learn film making, and SAMED members have taught film making in Cuba. The organization also assists ten African countries in agricultural and dairy farming.

At his meeting with Huey, Arafat indicated that the PLO may urge its supporters in the Arab countries to impose an oil blockade against the U.S. in order to stop American aid to

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HUEY NEWTON: "WE SUPPORT THE PALESTINIAN'S JUST STRUGGLE"

"We realize that some people who happen to be Jewish and who support Israel will use the Black Panther Party's position that is against imperialism and against the agents of the imperialist as an attack of anti-Semitism. We think that is a backbiting racist underhanded tactic and we will treat it as such. We have respect for all people, and we have respect for the right of any people to exist. So we want the Palestinian people and the Jewish people to live in harmony together. We support the Palestinians' just struggle for liberation one hundred percent. We will go on doing this, and we would like for all of the progressive people of the world to join our ranks in order to make a world in which all people can live."

— *On the Middle East*, Huey Newton

Celebrating Huey's Life — Passing on the History

"There are only differences in degree between what's happening to the blacks here and what's happening to all of the oppressed people in the world." — Dr. Huey P. Newton on Intercommunalism

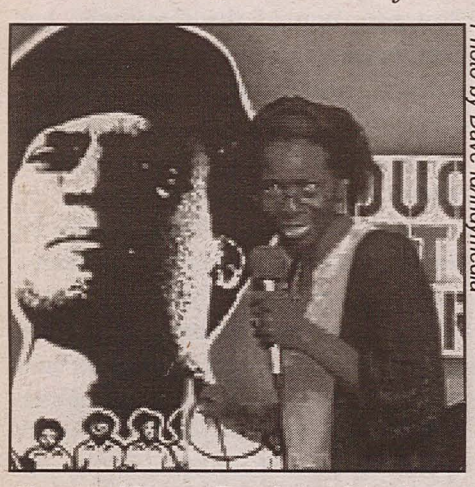


Photo by Dave Id/Indymedia

Neome Marco (Banks) talks about her experiences growing up as a child in the Party and a student at the Oakland Community School.

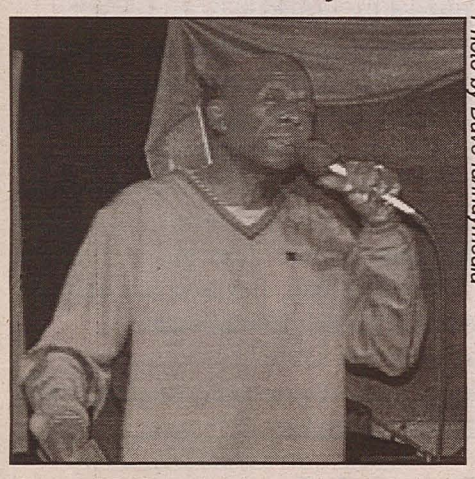


Photo by Dave Id/Indymedia

Steve McCutchen emceed Huey's Birthday Celebration at Black Repertory Theater.

Something I Didn't Have A Chance to Say

By Steve McCutchen

If we look back there are trails trials journeys along trek —
Along comes someone with a vision and a statement
get your boot off my neck —
someone who could stand toe to toe with the bloods in the 'hood
— did not accept police brutality
— the loss and disrespect for our humanity
— tired of hearing about what we could or what we should
— Huey P. Newton stepped off the street
— brought a vision that overleaped
— things about black folks need to be patient believed that common cause and our survival must come together there will be no retreat
— jump-start — 1966, Chairman Bobby, David, Li'l Bobby Hutton
— so many others to come
— Huey knew that they wouldn't be guaranteed the next morning sun
— but that vision — the old time faith told him too long on the run
— not afraid of government gun
— this is a quest a mission to criticize enemies of the masses who believe they stand above the forgotten many or the one
— action is the proof Huey would say
— anybody can talk everybody has an opinion but do something
— move something out of your way
— Huey lives on with us and shines as do the stars above

From elders

Commemoration Committee for the Black Panther Party (CCBPP) dedicated this year's Black History Month Celebration to passing on the history of revolutionary action to all those who desire to realize the Black Panther Party Ten-Point Program and Platform. "At this time of unprecedented economic exploitation and oppression at the hands of capitalist government that is causing the majority of Americans and working people worldwide to suffer, the lessons of our movement are needed more than ever as guides to strategy and tactics," stated CCBPP Chair Melvin Dickson, who gave the welcoming address at the February 22 event.

The Black History Month Celebration was held at the Black Repertory Theater in south Berkeley, highlighting and commemorating the memory of the late Dr. Huey P. Newton, co-founder of the Black Panther Party and chief theoretician who would have turned 67 years of age on February 17. "Newton's theory of revolutionary intercommunalism resonates with clarity and guidance to understanding the drastic economic and political shifts in the world today," Dickson said.

CCBPP's Black History Month Celebration brought together people from many communities and provided an arena for discussion of the history of the BPP from its beginnings in 1966 through 1982, when the party officially ended. The BPP's demise was largely due to the attacks, infiltration and assassinations suffered by the Panthers under the federal COINTELPRO (Counter Intelligence Program) founded and headed by FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover.

BPP cadre built survival programs in the black and low-income communities, giving our people hope and strength to stand up for what should be our rights. The programs gave a way to work together for an end to police brutality, poor education in the public schools, safety for the elderly in the community, and other survival needs. These goals led to creation of the BPP police alert patrol program, breakfast program for children, senior citizens escort program and literacy campaign.

The event's emcee was Steve McCutchen, a former BPP member from the Baltimore branch who came to Oakland in the early 1970s. He organized the Oakland Community Learning Center's Martial Arts Program. Now an Oakland public school teacher with a recently published memoir called *We Were Free For A While*, McCutchen read his poem, "Something I Didn't Have A Chance to Say."

Body Rock Cultural Dance group from Destiny Arts was the first performance of the evening, preceding the speakers, and included James Brown's "Give it Up," "Turn it Loose," Sean Paul's "All Out," and Tupac's "Holler if You Hear Me."

With background music by Larry (Stargroove) Robinson, the audience was captivated with testimonials of people who had experienced the BPP firsthand. Neome Banks Marco, a former student of the BPP Oakland Community School, gave a talk about her experience growing up as a student at the Oakland Community School, adding remarks about her impression of Huey Newton when she was an elementary school student.

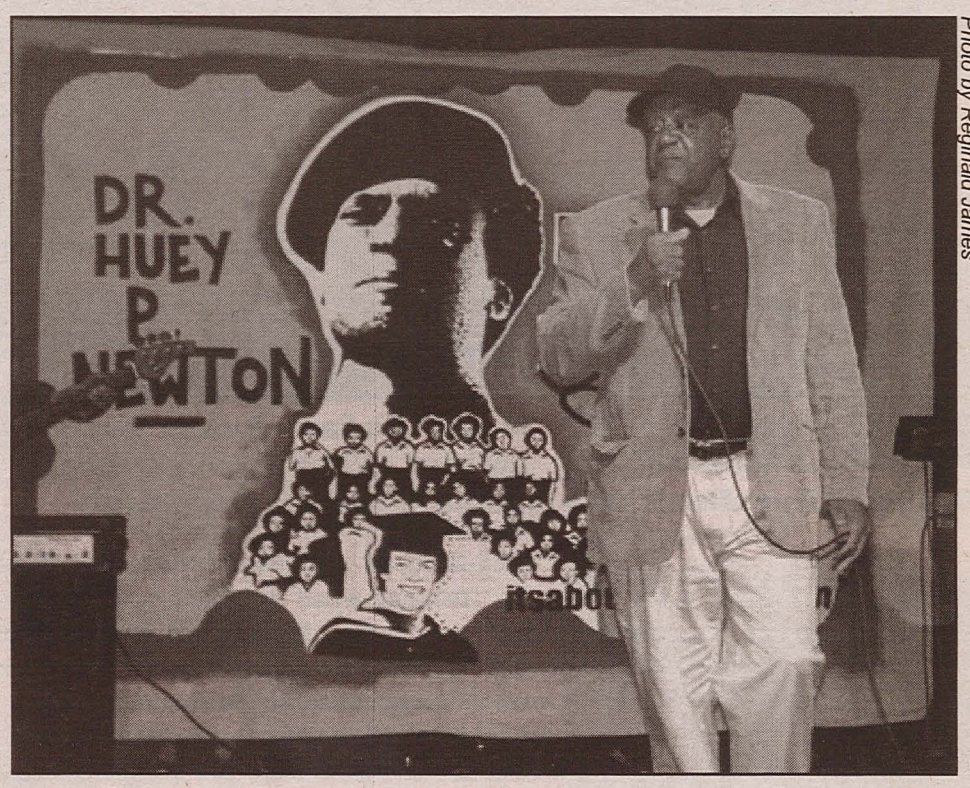


Photo by Reginald James

Bobby Seale's surprise appearance for Huey's 67th Birthday Celebration at the Black Repertory Group/Theater, captured the audience's attention, telling the story with musical background.

James Mott, a lead singer with The Lumpens and a BPP organizer through the late 1960s and 70s, connected the BPP to the culture of the black community through popular music.

Two Keynote Speakers on BPP History Emory Douglas and Bobby Seale

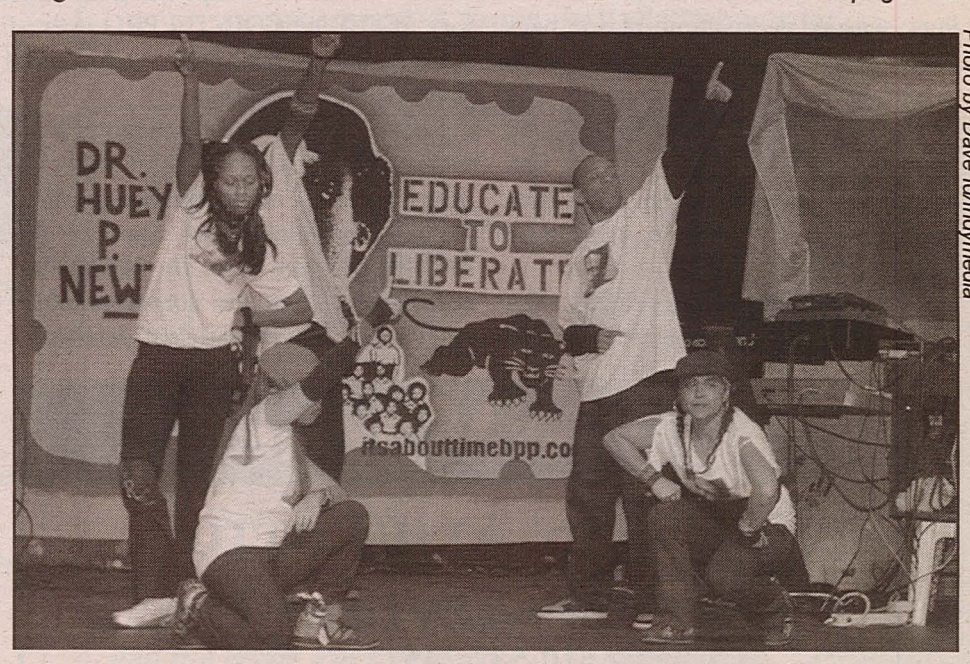
Emory Douglas, the former BPP Minister of Culture, presented a very powerful, power-point slide show presentation with illustrations and drawings from his book, *The Black Panther Party*, and told the story of the day he joined the Panthers: "I was involved in an event [Betty Shabazz, the widow of Malcolm X, visiting San Francisco in 1967] where Huey and Bobby pulled security," stated Emory Douglas. "The next day I knew I wanted to be a Panther. I ask Huey and Bobby how could I join. Huey gave me his phone number. I call Huey the next day, caught a bus from San Francisco to Oakland, to Huey's house. Huey would take me around the community, and then we would go by Bobby's house, and from there we would go on patrol."

Bobby Seale, co-founder and former Black Panther Party Chairman, made a surprise appearance at CCBPP's Black History Month event, giving a riveting portrayal of the founding of the BPP. Seale stepped up and followed Douglas, giving the second keynote address of the occasion.

"In 1968, February 17, we packed the Oakland Auditorium," Seale told the audience. "There are 6750 seats, and there was standing room only. That's when The Black Panther Party merged with SNCC. We had drafted the late Stokely Carmichael (Kwame Ture) some months earlier. We also drafted James Farmer and H. Rap Brown (Jamil Abdu Al-Amin). I had given a press conference on the steps of the San Francisco Police Department, announcing that we hereby drafted Stokely, not to fight the imperialist war in Vietnam because the Vietnamese never called us nigger!"

Seale described the BPP armed police alert patrol. "It was a thing that had never been done. I like to give this

Continued on page 12



Phoro by Dave Id/Indymedia

High Energy Hip Hop* Body Rock *from Destiny Arts captivated the audience on the occasion of Huey Newton's birthday.

SF 8 Case: A 'Bitter-Sweet' Victory

Murder Charges Dropped Against Four Former Panthers

Courtesy of SF 8 Defense Committee

Harold Taylor, Francisco Torres, Richard Brown, Soffiyah Elijah, the lead attorney, Richard O'Neal, Henry ("Hank") Jones, Randy Montesano (attorney), and Ray Boudreaux.

Editor's note: Since early 2007, the Commemoration Committee for the Black Panther Party (CCBPP), along with many other organizations, also the many concerned people of the Bay Area community and across the nation and the world have contributed toward this bitter-sweet victory. CCBPP attended numerous courthouse hearings and demonstrations. We spoke out on the travesty of justice that this case represents. We held classes on the history of the case, and we published articles in The Commemorator *demanding that the government drop the charges against these committed brothers who served their community well, and who continue promoting the goals and principles of the Black Panther Party.*

After law enforcement resurrected and retried a more than 30-year-old case based on torture-extracted "confessions" and other alleged evidence previously thrown out of court, California state prosecutors finally dropped charges in July against four of the group of defendants known as the San Francisco 8. This development followed a tenacious national and international campaign denouncing the SF 8 case as a political witch-hunt against former members of the Black Panther Party.

Charges against the eight related to a 1971 killing of a San Francisco police officer. In 1975, a judge tossed out the charges against three men accused of that killing, finding that Harold Taylor (one of the SF 8 now celebrating his freedom) and his two co-defendants had undergone days of torture at the hands of New Orleans police who had used electric shock, cattle prods, beatings, sensory deprivation, plastic bags and hot, wet blankets for asphyxiation to extract "confession" statements. The court found J. Edgar Hoover's FBI, and New York, Los Angeles and San Francisco police departments to have been directly involved in the torture operation as well.

Arrested in January 2007, the other three members of the SF 8 to have all charges dropped after this two-and-a-half year long court struggle were Richard Brown, Ray Boudreaux and Henry Jones.

Defendant Jalil Muntaqim (Anthony Bottom) termed the outcome for himself and Herman Bell, both already serving time on prior convictions, a "bitter-sweet" victory — they each chose to accept plea bargains in exchange for state prosecutors dropping all charges against four co-defendants for lack of sufficient evidence, and dropping murder and conspiracy to murder charges against themselves, and stipulating that they would not serve additional jail time for pleading no-contest (Muntaqim) and guilty (Bell) to lesser charges.

Since early 2007, Commemoration Committee for the Black Panther Party (CCBPP) along with numerous others, helped build material support and publicity for the SF 8 case across the nation, contributing to this latest legal development. Publicizing the story of persecution of the SF 8 in *The Commemorator*, CCBPP members demanded that the government drop charges against these committed brothers, many of whom had served their communities well for decades in a manner in keeping with the goals and principles of the Black Panther Party. CCBPP members attended SF 8 courthouse hearings, participated in demonstrations and conducted showings and discussion sessions of the documentary about this travesty of justice, called *The Legacy of Torture.* CCBPP volunteers gave talks and published articles in *The Commemorator* on the political context of the case, explaining the history of FBI-led COINTELPRO operations against the BPP and other revolutionary groupings.

The SF 8 "case" began 2003, when Attorney General John Ashcroft under the Bush administration applied funds from Homeland Security to secretly retry the case. By 2007, with cooperation from the corporate-managed media that fanned "anti-terrorist" hysteria, the California State Attorney General Jerry Brown called for a state grand jury to be convened that determined to recharge these brothers, placing them under arrest ("double jeopardy") and slapping multi-million dollar bails on each.

After dozens of court hearings and demonstrations throughout 2007 and 2008, the multimillion-dollar bails were reduced, allowing supporters to raise funds for the release of defendants Harold Taylor (Panama City, Florida), Richard Brown (San Francisco), Ray Boudreaux (Los Angeles), Henry Jones (Los Angeles) and Francisco Torres. The five hit the streets speaking out and organizing additional support to drop the charges. On Monday, July 6, San Francisco Judge Philip Moscone dropped all charges against four of the eight defendants.

A fifth defendant, Torres, is out on $600,000 bail, facing a court hearing in October. According to Torres' attorney, Charles Bourdon, his client's voluntary manslaughter charge is expected to be dropped by the state attorney general's office and he has filed a motion for dismissal of all charges against Torres, who has consistently maintained his innocence. In the early 1970s, the FBI claimed Torres' fingerprint had been found on a cigarette lighter near the 1971 crime scene. Subsequently, the defense proved that the fingerprints in question did not match those of Francisco Torres and a Los Angeles federal judge threw the case out of court.

The late and beloved John Bowman, one of the three who had been tortured by members of the New Orleans police department in 1973, died shortly after the bogus murder charges were once again brought against him and his comrades.

Jalil Muntaqim, who pled no contest to conspiracy to commit voluntary manslaughter at the July 6 hearing said, "The entire (legal defense) group discussed whether I would plead no contest to conspiracy to manslaughter. After some discussion, I reluctantly agreed to take the plea and be sentenced to three years probation, one year of jail time with credit for time served... because of my plea, four other defendants would have all charges dismissed for insufficient evidence."

According to Bell in his recent letter to their many supporters, "There is no disunity here, just a tactical legal decision having been made."

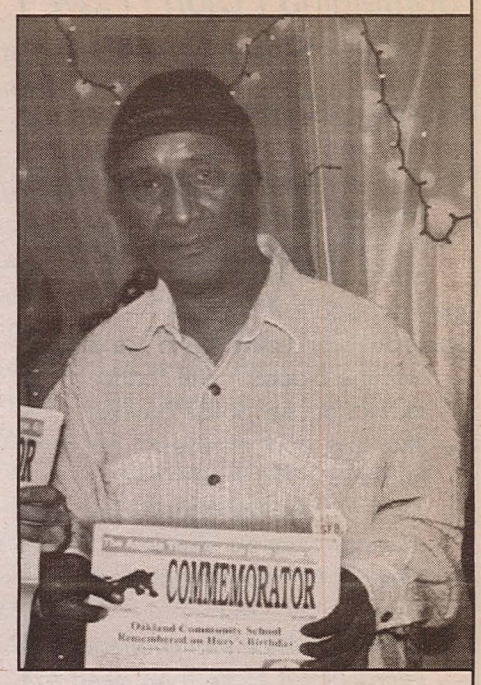
"This is finally the disposition of a case that should never have been brought in the first place," stated Soffiyah Elijah, the lead attorney for the SF 8 legal defense team.

All Power to the People

Noted Artist Paul Mooney Supports the SF 8

Paul Mooney, a nationally acclaimed comedian, writer, and actor, gave a benefit performance last December at the Black Repertory Theater in South Berkeley on behalf of the San Francisco Eight, former Black Panther Party members, who are victims of double jeopardy charges.

Mooney, who is from the East Bay, has won multiple Emmy awards as a stand-up comedian. CCBPP volunteers Eseibio Halliday and Oscar Stingley met both Mooney and Richard Brown, a member of the San Francisco Eight, at the benefit event.



CCBPP Photos

Above, Paul Mooney, nationally acclaimed comedian, writer and actor, displaying his copy of The Commemorator.
Left, CCBPP volunteers Eseibio Halliday (left) and Oscar Stingley (right) meeting then-SF 8 defendant Richard Brown at Black Repertory Theater in Berkeley.

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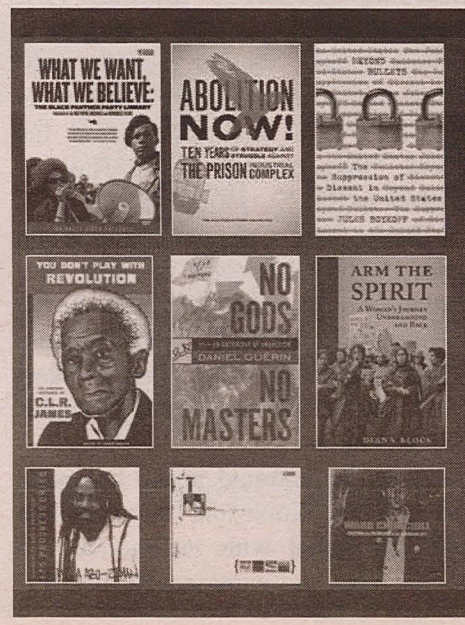
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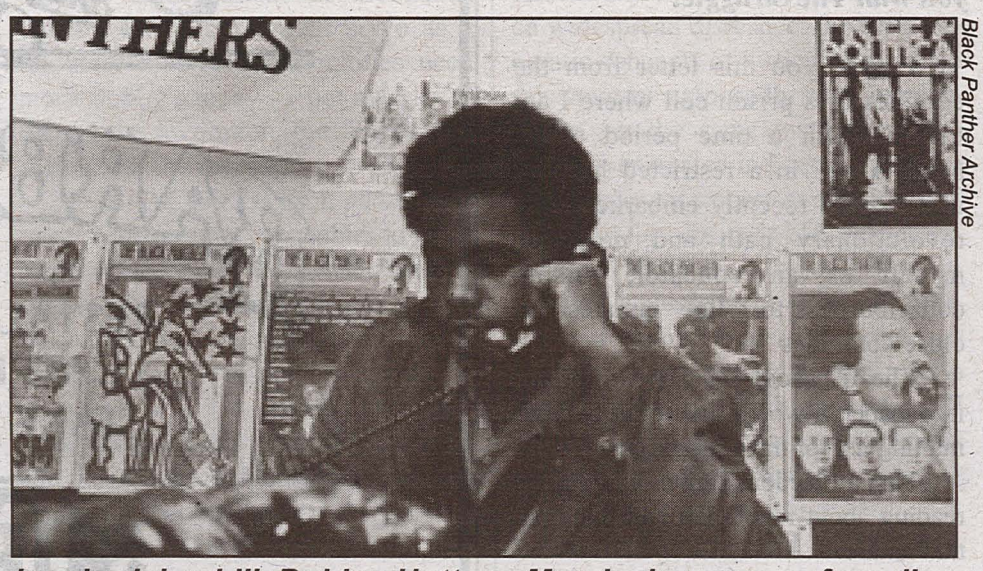
Citing Withheld Evidence, Supporters of Mumia Abu-Jamal Call for Civil Rights Investigation

By Hans Bennett

On April 6, 2009, the U.S. Supreme Court refused to consider an appeal from death-row journalist and former Black Panther, Mumia Abu-Jamal, who was convicted of first-degree murder in the shooting death of white Philadelphia Police Officer, Daniel Faulkner, at a 1982 trial deemed unfair by Amnesty International, the European Parliament, the Japanese Diet, Nelson Mandela, and numerous others. Citing the Supreme Court denial and several instances of withheld evidence, Abu-Jamal's international support network is now calling for a federal civil rights investigation into Abu-Jamal's case.

Abu-Jamal has always maintained his innocence, and today still fights the conviction from his death-row cell in Waynesburg, Pennsylvania, where he also records weekly radio commentaries, and has now written six books.

Recently, Abu-Jamal had petitioned the U.S. Supreme Court to review the U.S. Third Circuit Court ruling of March, 27 2008, which rejected his bid, based on three issues, for a new guilt-phase trial. One issue was that of racially discriminatory jury selection, based on the 1986 case *Batson v. Kentucky*, on which the three-judge panel split 2-1, with Judge Thomas Ambro dissenting. Ambro argued that prosecutor Joseph McGill's use of ten out of his 15 peremptory strikes to remove otherwise acceptable African-American jurors, was itself enough evidence of racial discrimination to grant Abu-Jamal a preliminary hearing that could have led to a new trial. In denying Abu-Jamal this preliminary hearing, Ambro argued that the Court was creating new rules that were being exclusively applied to Abu-Jamal's case. The denial "goes against the grain of our prior actions…I see no reason why we should not afford Abu-Jamal the courtesy of our precedents," wrote Ambro.



Black Panther Archive

Inspired by Li'l Bobby Hutton, Mumia became a founding member of BPP Philadelphia chapter in 1968 at the age of 14.

Launched Campaign Cites Withheld Evidence

Thousands of signatures have been collected for a public letter to U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder, which reads: "Inasmuch as there is no other court to which Abu-Jamal can appeal for justice, we turn to you for remedy of a 27-year history of gross violations of U.S. constitutional law and international standards of justice." The letter cites Holder's recent investigation into the case of former Senator Ted Stevens, which led to all charges against him being dropped: "You were specifically outraged by the fact that the prosecution withheld information critical to the defense's argument for acquittal, a violation clearly committed by the prosecution in Abu-Jamal's case. Mumia Abu-Jamal, though not a U.S. Senator of great wealth and power, is a Black man revered around the world for his courage, clarity, and commitment, and deserves no less than Senator Stevens."

Several campaigns seeking a civil right investigation into the Abu-Jamal case have been launched since 1995, at which time, the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) was one of many groups that publicly supported an investigation. In a 1995 letter written independently of the CBC, Representatives Chaka Fattah, Ron Dellums, Cynthia McKinney, Maxine Waters, and John Conyers (now Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee) stated, "There is ample evidence that Mr. Abu-Jamal's constitutional rights were violated, that he did not receive a fair trial, and that he is, in fact, innocent." Assistant Attorney General Andrew Fois responded to the CBC's request, and in a September 1995 rejection letter written to Congressman Ron Dellums, Fois conceded that even though there is a 5-year statute of limitations for a civil rights investigation, the statute does not apply if "there is significant evidence of an ongoing conspiracy." One of the 2009 campaign's organizers is Dr. Suzanne Ross, a spokesperson for the Free Mumia Abu-Jamal Coalition of New York City <http://www.freemumia.com/>. Citing Andrew Fois' letter, Ross argues that the "continued denial of justice to Mumia in the federal courts, as documented by dissenting Judge Thomas Ambro," is evidence of an "ongoing conspiracy," and thus merits an investigation. "Throughout the history of this case, we were always told 'Wait until we get to the federal courts. They will surely overturn the racism and gross misconduct of Judge Sabo,' but we never got even a preliminary hearing on the issue considered most winnable: racial bias in jury selection, the so-called *Batson* issue." Ross also criticizes the Third Circuit's denial of Abu-Jamal's claim that Judge Sabo was unfair at the 1995-97 Post-Conviction Relief Act (PCRA) hearings, and considers this denial to be further evidence of an "ongoing conspiracy." Ross argues that the courts' continued affirmation of Sabo's rulings during the PCRA hearings, and Sabo's ultimate ruling that nothing presented at the PCRA hearings was significant enough to merit a new trial, serves to legitimize numerous injustices throughout Abu-Jamal's case. Specifically referring to the issue of withheld evidence, that was central to the case of former Senator Ted Stevens, organizer Suzanne Ross identifies five key instances in Abu-Jamal's case, where "evidence was withheld that could have led to Mumia's acquittal." The DA's office withheld two items from Abu-Jamal's defense: the actual location of the driver's license application found in Officer Faulkner's pocket; and Pedro Polakoff's crime scene photos. Then, at the request of prosecutor McGill, Judge Sabo ruled to block three items from the jury: prosecution eyewitness Robert Chobert's probation status and criminal history; testimony from defense eyewitness Veronica Jones about police attempts to solicit false testimony; and testimony from Police Officer Gary Waskshul.

DA Suppresses Evidence About Kenneth Freeman

In their recent books, Michael Schiffmann (*Race Against Death: The Struggle for the Life and Freedom of Mumia Abu-Jamal*, 2006) and J. Patrick O'Connor (*The Framing of Mumia Abu-Jamal*, 2008) argue that the actual shooter of Officer Faulkner was a man named Kenneth Freeman. Schiffmann and O'Connor argue that Freeman was an occupant of Billy Cook's car, who shot Faulkner in response to Faulkner having shot Abu-Jamal first, and then fled the scene before police arrived.

Central to Schiffmann and O'Connor's argument was the presence of a driver's license application for one Arnold Howard, which was found in the front pocket of Officer Faulkner's shirt. Abu-Jamal's defense would not learn about this until 13 years later, because the Police and DA's office had failed to notify them about the application's crucial location. Journalist Linn Washington argues that this failure was "a critical and deliberate omission," and "a major violation of fair trial rights and procedures. If the appeals process had any semblance of fairness, this misconduct alone should have won a new trial for Abu-Jamal." More importantly, Washington says "this evidence provides strong proof of a third person at the scene along with Faulkner and Billy Cook. The prosecution case against Abu-Jamal rests on the assertion that Faulkner encountered a lone Cook minutes before Abu-Jamal's arrival on the scene, but Faulkner got that application from somebody other than Cook, who had his own license."

At the 1995 PCRA hearing, Arnold Howard testified that he had loaned his temporary, non-photo license to Kenneth Freeman, who was Billy Cook's business partner and close friend. Further, Howard stated that police came to his house early in the morning on Dec. 9, 1981, and brought him to the police station for questioning because he was suspected of being "the person who had run away" from the scene, but he was released after producing a 4:00 a.m. receipt from a drugstore across town (which provided an alibi) and telling them that he had loaned the application to Freeman (who Howard reports was also at the police station that morning).

Also pointing to Freeman's presence in the car with Cook, O'Connor and Schiffmann cite prosecution witness Cynthia White's testimony at Cook's separate trial for charges of assaulting Faulkner, where White describes both a "driver" and a "passenger" in Cook's VW. Also notable, investigative journalist Dave Lindorff's book (*Killing Time: An Investigation into the Death Row Case of Mumia Abu-Jamal*, 2003) features an interview with Cook's lawyer Daniel Alva, in which Alva says that Cook had confided to him within days of the shooting that Freeman had been with him that morning.

Linn Washington argues that "this third person at the crime scene is consistent with eyewitness accounts of the shooter fleeing the scene. Remember that accounts from both prosecution and defense witnesses confirm the existence of a fleeing shooter. Abu-Jamal was arrested at the scene, critically wounded. He did not run away and

Continued on page 12

Working to end drug war injustice

Founded in 1997, the November Coalition is a growing body of citizens whose lives have been gravely affected by our government's present drug policy. We are prisoners, parents of those incarcerated, wives, sisters, brothers, children, aunts, uncles and cousins. Some of us are loving friends and concerned citizens, each of us alarmed that drug war casualties are rising in absolutely horrific proportions.

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Letters To The Editor

Dear Editor,

My name is Ernest Witt Jr. I am a 41-year-old black man interested in learning more about the CCBPP and possibly becoming a member. The reason I am interested is I believe the statement of purpose. I would also like to know how I can be of service to the cause. I read one of your newspapers and it is inspiring. Please send me some literature. Thank you sincerely for your time.

Ernest Witt, Jr.

Commemorator,

I'm writing in regards to your newspaper. I've read a few in the past and found them very informative. I'd like to know ... how to subscribe to you. I'd greatly appreciate any information you can provide me concerning this matter.

Thank You.

Sincerely,

Jamie Singleton
#B-579208 A1211
Charlotte Correctional Institute
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Revolutionary Greetings to all of you with The Struggle!

I write you this letter from the confines of a prison cell where I am locked down a time period of 23 hours a day in a restricted housing unit. I have recently embarked on a revolutionary path and now see myself as an educator, raising consciousness to fellow inmates and close comrades.

I heard about *The Commemorator* newspaper...I would like to be on your mailing list for the newspaper.

I am a Freedom Fighter who enjoys reading about revolution and things in that nature.

So can you please put a comrade on and put me on your mailing list so I can start receiving your latest issue — I will greatly appreciate that. Hope to be receiving issues of *The Commemorator* soon.

Until then, I remain...

All the Power to the People!
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Comrade Amri Uhuru Bey

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***The Commemorator* welcomes letters to the Editor! Please write and let us know your news and views. Thank you!**

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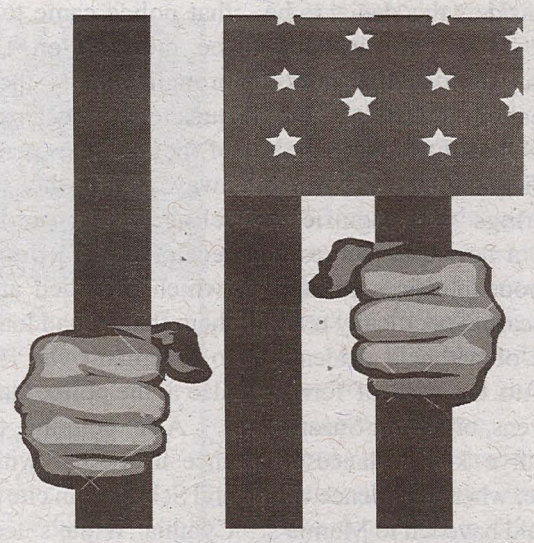

ANGOLA 3

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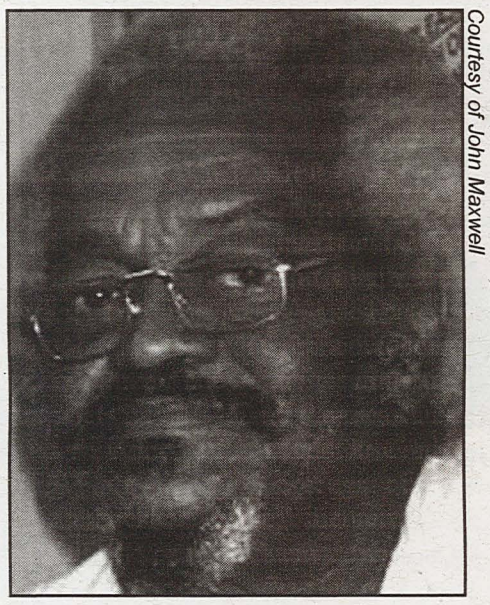
INTERNATIONAL UPDATE

Haiti: Racism and Poverty


Courtesy of John Maxwell

By John Maxwell

The people of Haiti are as poor as human beings can be.

According to the statisticians of the World Bank and others who speculate about how many Anglos can dance on the head of a peon, Haiti may either be the second, third or fourth poorest country in the world. In Haiti's case, statistics are irrelevant.

When large numbers of people are reduced to eating dirt – earth, clay – it is impossible to imagine poverty any more absolute, any more desperate, any more inhuman and degrading.

The chairman of the World Bank visited Haiti this past week. (February 2009) This man, Robert Zoellick, is an expert finance-capitalist, a former partner in the investment bankers Goldman Sachs, whose 22,000 'traders" last year averaged bonuses of more than $600,000 each.

Goldman Sachs paid out over $18 billion in bonuses to its traders last year, about 50% more than the GDP of Haiti's 8 million people.

The chairman of Goldman took home more than $70 million and his lieutenants – as Zoellick once was – $40 million or more, each.

It should be clear that someone like Robert Zoellick is likely to be totally bemused by Haiti when his entertainment allowance could probably feed the entire population for a day or two. It is not hard to see that Mr Zoellick cannot understand why Haiti needs debt relief.

Haiti is now forced by the World Bank and its bloodsucking siblings like the IMF, to pay more than $1 million a week to satisfy debts incurred by the Duvaliers and the post-Duvalier tyrannies. Haiti must repay this debt to prove its fitness for 'help' from the Multilateral Financial Institutions (MFI).

One million dollars a week would feed everybody in Haiti even if only at a very basic level – at least they would not have to eat earth patties. Instead the Haitians export this money to pay the salaries of such as Zoellick.

But Zoellick doesn't see it that way. According to the World Bank's website the bank is in the business of eradicating poverty. At the rate it does that in Haiti the Bank, I estimate, will be in the poverty eradication business for another 18,000 years.

The reason Haiti is in its present state is pretty simple. Canada, the United States and France, all of whom consider themselves civilised nations, colluded in the overthrow of the democratic government of Haiti four years ago. They did this for several excellent reasons:

- Haiti 200 years ago defeated the world major powers, France (twice) Britain and Spain, to establish its independence and to abolish plantation slavery. This was unforgivable.
- Despite being bombed, strafed and occupied by the United States early in the past century, and despite the American endowment of a tyrannical and brutal Haitian army designed to keep the natives in their place, the Haitians insisted on re-establishing their independence. Having overthrown the Duvaliers and their successors, the Haitians proceeded to elect as president a little black parish priest who had become their hero by defying the forces of evil and tyranny.
- The new president of Haiti, Jean Bertrand Aristide refused to sell out (privatise) the few assets owned by the government (the public utilities mainly);
- Aristide also insisted that France owed Haiti more than $25 billion in repayment of blood money extorted from Haiti in the 19th century.

Maxwell's writing has appeared in The Commemorator, *supplying poignant analysis on the Caribbean, Jamaica, Haiti and South America.*

Members of Congressional Black Caucus Call for 'Haitian Protection Act' and the Truth Act

February 2009 marked the 5th anniversary of the U.S.-led coup d'état that overthrew the democratically elected government of Haitian President Jean Bertrand Aristide, literally kidnapping him and his wife and illegally transporting them out of Haiti.

Congresswoman Maxine Waters (D-CA) visited Haiti immediately after the 2004 United States-led coup and kidnapping of President Aristide. Waters and members of the Congressional Black Congress raised their protests to the Bush Administration.

At that time Congresswoman Waters put out a statement saying, in part: "I have visited Haiti three times [in 2004] and was able to provide first-hand information about what was going on in that country. I explained that the so-called opposition was a conglomeration of former supporters of the dictatorial Duvalier regime. Andre Apaid, an American citizen in charge of the Group of 184, started this coup three weeks ago. Guy Philippe, who was exiled to the Dominican Republic after he tried to stage a coup in 2002, was leading a band of exiled military criminals, thugs and murderers – some convicted in absentia for killings they committed in ousting Aristide from office when he was first elected. These were the people pursuing a coup d'état to return Haiti to the corrupt dictatorial rule of the past… The thugs and military criminals have accomplished their mission of deposing Aristide with the overt approval and support of the Bush Administration…"

Congresswoman Barbara Lee (D-CA) and ten other co-sponsoring members of Congress, including Dennis Kucinich (OH), Charles Rangel (NY), Janice Schkowsky (IL), re-introduced a bill (H.R. 331) on January 8, 2009 calling for an investigation of the Bush Administration's role in the 2004 coup d'état of Haiti. The original bill, known as the TRUTH Act, has been referred to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs at every session since Lee first made the case for a congressional investigation in March of 2004.

Another action in Congress took place in April of 2008 when U.S. Representative Alcee L. Hastings led the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) in urging President Bush to take immediate and decisive action on Haiti. In a letter to the President authored by Hastings, the 44 House members of the CBC urged Bush to drastically increase U.S. efforts to help Haiti. Representative Hastings is author of H.R. 522, the Haitian Protection Act, legislation that would designate Haitian nationals in the United States as eligible for Temporary Protected Status (TPS). Under Section 244(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1990, TPS may be granted when there is an ongoing armed conflict posing serious threat to personal safety. TPS designation temporarily halts deportation and grants permission to work, enabling Haitians currently in the U.S. to legally work and contribute to their country's recovery. As Hastings stated in April 2008, "The people of Haiti have been victimized by our country's double-standard immigration policies for far too long. As we wait for humanitarian relief to trickle into the hands of Haiti's starving population, the United States has the power to provide our struggling neighbor immediate, substantial relief by granting Haitians currently residing in the United States Temporary Protected Status."

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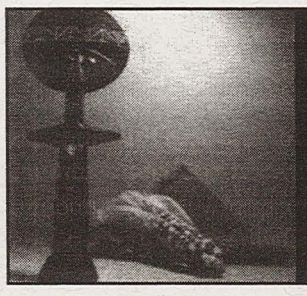

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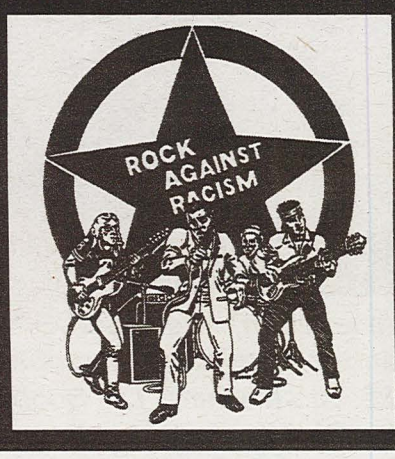


Photo by Dave Id/Indymedia

Phyllis Hutton, Li'l Bobby Hutton's sister, recalls her "baby" brother.

Photo by Dave Id/Indymedia

Joyce Hutton enjoys singing in remembrance of her late uncle, along with her four children.

Honoring Li'l Bobby Hutton

Continued from page 1

general, but against the low wages and poor working conditions of black sanitation workers in Memphis, drawing support for a labor movement of low-paid workers, and then took his position further by publicly opposing the United States government's undeclared war and aggression in Vietnam.

"Bobby Hutton was an ordinary youth who loved his people and was committed to the Party…He was about taking care of business," said Emory Douglas, artist and former BPP Minister of Culture.

This year's annual Li'l Bobby Hutton Day Celebration was hosted by Family and Friends of Li'l Bobby Hutton, co-sponsored by It's About Time/BPP Alumni and Commemoration Committee for the Black Panther Party. The highlight of the program was an open mike poetry contest and testimonial remarks from relatives and comrades who remembered Li'l Bobby, his courage and determined spirit.

Joyce Hutton, the niece of Li'l Bobby Hutton and Director of Family and Friends of Li'l Bobby Hutton, emceed the program. Sculptor Briggette Goodman announced progress on production of the Li'l Bobby Hutton Memorial Statue, projected to be completed by 2010 and erected in a place of honor inside West Oakland's Li'l Bobby Hutton (DeFremery) Park.

Damon Eves also gave an update on his campaign to rename Oakland's 7th Street "Black Panther Boulevard."

A moment of silence was called at the April 11 event by Dickson, CCBPP Chairman, in honor of Richard Aoki — BPP Field Marshal and founding BPP member as well as past honoree at the 2007 Li'l Bobby Hutton Award Dinner — who passed away in March (see obituary in this issue). Dickson quoted Aoki saying, "Li'l Bobby was… a mature thinker and was very serious about his commitment to the BPP." CCBPP member Marlene Krohn added her sentiments at this celebration of Li'l Bobby, who would have turned 58 years old this year.

"Too many of our people have been cut down in the prime of life," said Dickson, CCBPP Chairman and founder of the Li'l Bobby Hutton Literacy Campaign. "We must examine the persistent pattern of police brutality and violence that is most acute in communities of people of color in this country. In the Bay Area alone, recent examples — from the well known case of Oscar Grant III to the lesser publicized murders — give a glimpse into the urgent need to gain control over our lives and means of livelihood through political and economic power."

Oscar Grant III and other murders at hands of police

Early New Year's 2009 morning, Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) police officers beat and then fatally shot in the back, execution style, Oscar Grant III, a 22-year old father, as he lay prone with his hands behind his back at the Oakland Fruitvale (BART) station. The act of the 27-year old police officer, Johannes Mehserle, pulling the trigger and taking the life of Oscar Grant must be put in a larger context of a mounting pattern of police murders of black and Latino citizens, in the Bay Area and nationwide:

- July 25, 2008: Mac "Jody" Woodfox…a 27-year old black man shot in the back during a traffic stop by an Oakland police officer.
- July 19, 2008: Lesley Xavier Allen…a 20-year old black male was shot and killed by Oakland police after a chase into San Leandro.
- March 19, 2008: José Luis Buenrostro-Gonzales…a 15-year old Latino male was shot and killed by Oakland police.
- March 14, 2008: Casper R. Banjo…a 71-year old internationally known artist was shot and killed by Oakland police on his way to the police station — police claimed Banjo carried a replica gun.
- February 16, 2008: Anita Gay 55-year old black woman, mother, shot in the back at point-blank range by a Berkeley police officer, called in for a domestic dispute.
- December 31, 2007: The same officer, Hector Jimenez, who murdered Mr. Woodfox eight months later (see above) shot Andrew Moppin, a 20-year old unarmed black man, in the back, killing him.
- September 20, 2007: Gary King…a 20-year old black man, was tasered and shot twice in the back by Oakland police — King was not even a suspect.

BART riders captured the murderous act against Grant on several videos, and their wide viewing prompted Mehserle to quit his job and flee the state. Mehserle did not surface back in California until January 14, two weeks after the crime. The local news broadcasted that Mehserle was unreachable by the police department, until they tracked him in Nevada by tracing his cell phone.

Also captured on video, shortly before Grant's murder, were his friends, Michael Greer (21), Jack Bryson (23) and Nijar Bryson (21) being beaten by BART police officers Tony Perone and Mehserle. This did not come to light in the local press until four weeks later.

After Mehserle's arrest, bail was set at $3 million, but on February 6, although Mehserle is of working class background, he somehow made bail. The community expressed their outrage at the killing, the failure to immediately arrest Mehserle and the failure of officials to address the continued police brutality and killings taking place in our streets. Protests were mounted multiple times throughout the Bay Area at the BART station where the murder occurred, Oakland City Hall and Civic Center and in downtown Oakland city streets.

In January, hundreds of racially diverse people, youth, church and religious organizations, labor organizations, protesters, activists, students, teachers, and workers walked from Oakland Superior Court on Oak Street to 14th and Broadway to demand justice not only for Oscar Grant but also for the others beaten by the BART police officers. Michael Greer, Jack Bryson and brother Nijar Bryson also marched and were on the platform telling their story to the protesters.

Some cited a mounting pattern of police murders of black and Latino citizens in the Bay Area and nationwide, including 22-year old Adolph Grimes III

Continued on page 13

Photo by Dave Id/Indymedia

Melvin Dickson calls for moment of silence in remembrance of fallen comrade, Richard Aoki.

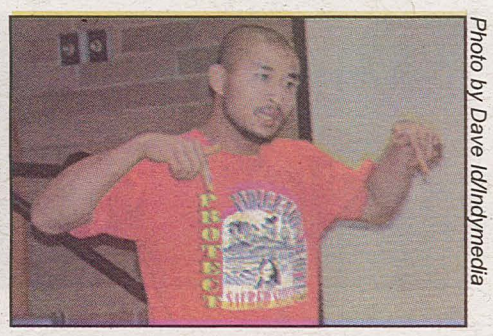


Photo by Dave Id/Indymedia

Tuson DuBois won first prize for the poetry contest.

Photo by Dave Id/Indymedia

Marlene Krohn, longtime CCBPP organizer and board member, spoke about what Li'l Bobby Hutton Birthday means to her.

Photo by Dave Id/Indymedia

Briggette Goodman, sculptor, is using her talents to help create a Hutton memorial statue.

Photo by Dave Id/Indymedia

Damon Eves of BBP Boulevard acknowledges the honor he felt to attend and participate in the celebration.

Richard Aoki — The Remembrance of a Comrade

Continued from page 1

As a student at Oakland City College and then Merritt College, he became active in the movement against the U.S. war in Vietnam and remet Huey P. Newton, whom he had known as a youth. Huey introduced Richard to Bobby Seale, a fellow student at Merritt College. They presented the just-written BPP Ten-Point Platform and Program to Richard; Richard became a founding member of the Black Panther Party, along with Li'l Bobby Hutton, Elbert "Big Man" Howard and David Hilliard.

In 1966, Richard transferred to University of California at Berkeley (UCB); there he helped form the Asian American Political Alliance and co-founded the Third World Liberation Front while earning a master's degree in social work.

In 1969, Richard collaborated with Charlie Brown of the Black Student Union and Manuel Delgado of the Mexican American Students Union to lead a student strike at UCB, demanding that ethnic studies be added to the school's curriculum.

During this historic two-month campus strike, Governor Ronald Reagan declared a state of emergency and sent in the National Guard. The strike ended in the students winning their demand for establishment of an ethnic studies program; the precedents they set at UCB subsequently led to changes in college and high school curricula throughout the nation.

Richard was one of the first coordinators of UCB's Asian American Studies Program; he became a professional educator and counselor with Peralta Community College District in Oakland, where he remained until his retirement in 1998.

"I first met Richard on August 22, 1990 at the first Anniversary Commemoration of Dr. Huey Newton's death held at Li'l Bobby Hutton Park in West Oakland," stated Melvin Dickson, Chairman of Commemoration Committee for the Black Panther Party. "Richard introduced himself and told me that he had something that he would like to say. As the lead coordinator for the event, I had the responsibility of making sure that people who were friends of the BPP and had known Huey personally would get a chance to speak on behalf of the BPP legacy.

"Many former Black Panther Party members who were present, including Bobby Seale, David Hilliard and Melvin Newton — Huey's older brother — greeted Richard as a longtime friend and comrade. Bobby Seale introduced Richard as a former member of the BPP who had had a special assignment to organize the Asian community, and spoke of how Richard had taken his party assignments very seriously.

"Richard addressed the crowd, and spoke of growing up in West Oakland and meeting Huey Newton and other BPP leaders. He talked of his organizing for empowerment in the Asian community when the BPP had begun organizing its police alert patrol. He also spoke about how he

Continued on page 15

Photo by Andre Nguyen

Asian American women activist leaders from late 1960s to 1970s in San Francisco Bay area. Involved in Asian American Political Alliance, 1969; Asian American Center of San Francisco; International Hotel Tenants Association of SF; and Japanese Community Youth Council of SF. From left: Victoria Wong, Priscilla Eng, Liz Del Sol, Lillian Bando, Cathy Higashioka and Sho Arai.

Photo by Andre Nguyen

Bobby Coleman and Melvin Dickson of Commemoration Committee for the Black Panther Party.

Photo by Andre Nguyen

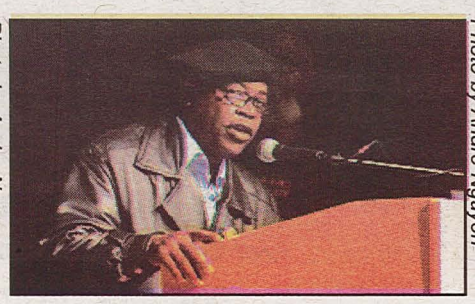
Jim Aoki, Richard's cousin (right), sitting next to Floyd Hen (Asian American Political Alliance, Third World Liberation Front, 1969).

Photo by Andre Nguyen

Yuri Kochiyama (left foreground), longtime militant activist, receives warm greeting from Michael Tagawa and wife, of the former Seattle BPP Chapter.

Photo by Andre Nguyen

Terika Lewis performs a special tribute to a longtime comrade.



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William (Billy X) Jennings of It's About Time BPP addressing the audience.

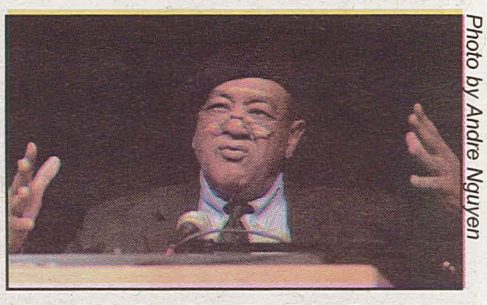

Photo by Andre Nguyen

Bobby Seale, Black Panther Party co-founder, tells story about Richard and Huey.

Photo by Andre Nguyen

Yuri Kochiyama speaks of Richard's commitment.

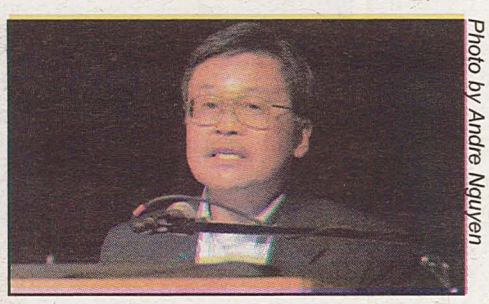

Photo by Andre Nguyen

Harvey Dong, Professor at UC Berkeley Ethnic Studies Dept., emceed the service.

Photo by Andre Nguyen

Ben Wang, documentarian for Richard Aoki Tribute.

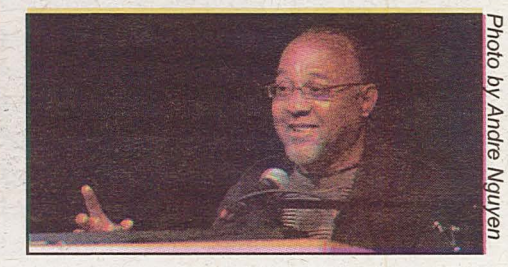

Photo by Andre Nguyen

Douglas H. Daniels, Richard's close friend, UC Santa Barbara Professor of African American Studies.

CCBPP Photo

Former UCB students Beatrice Reyes and Barbara Mumbly were mentored by Richard during the 1999 student strike to defend the ethnic studies program.

Photo by Andre Nguyen

Dr. Diana Fujino, author of Richard's biography, from UC Santa Barbara, CA.

Celebrating Huey's Life:

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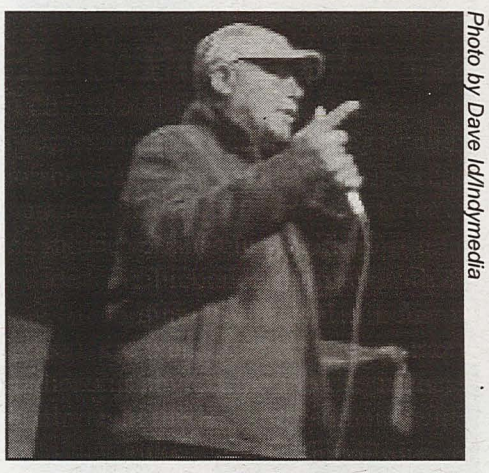


Photo by Dave Id/Indymedia

Emory Douglas, revolutionary artist, gives an inspiring presentation at Huey's Birthday celebration.

credit to Huey.... He made sure we did the law, that we followed all the particulars, the specifics."

Nadeen Elshorafa Gives Update on Gaza

Nadeen Elshorafa, an organizer at the Arab Resource Center, also spoke at Black History Month, detailing conditions of the Palestinian people in Gaza, victims of extreme violence and deprivations. "In 1980, Dr. Huey P. Newton, on behalf of the Black Panther Party, recognized the right for the return of the Palestinian people to their land, and their right to self-determination. On December 27, 2008, there were 1.5 million people in Gaza, with a density of 11,136 Palestinians per square mile, which is the most densely populated area in the world. The density of Alameda County is 2,000 people per square mile.

"You hear on the media that this is a war on Hamas. No. It is not a war on Hamas, but it is a war on the resistance movement. Hamas is a part of the resistance movement."

(Nadeen Elshorafa was arrested a month later on March 21 at a rally in San Francisco marking the sixth anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Iraq. Nadeen, along with four Palestinian and Arab women were arrested and held for five days after acting to assist and comfort a group of Arab and Palestinian children when they were victims of an unprovoked attack by San Francisco police at the rally. The women had asked the officers in charge and gotten permission to take the children and comfort them, and yet officers turned on the women, placing them under arrest.)

'The Lumpens' and the Black Panther Party Legacy

Rickey Vincent, local radio station KPFA DJ/commentator, interviewed a former member of The Lumpens singing group, James Motts. "The Lumpens were, first of all, members of the Black Panther Party who wrote and sang popular tunes with socially conscious lyrics, from late1960s through the mid 70s. Mott conversed on stage with Vincent about his experience with The Lumpens in promoting the BPP Platform.

William (Billy X) Jennings of ItsAbouttimebpp.com website, a former BPP member from the Sacramento branch, provided a display table on The Lumpens' history. The Huey and the Black Panther Party banner was prominently positioned on the stage.

Representatives of Li'l Bobby Hutton Memorial Committee promoted their campaign to produce a historic monument of Li'l Bobby Hutton in West Oakland at Li'l Bobby Hutton (DeFremery) Park.

CCBPP History & Program

CCBPP Chairman Melvin Dickson explained that CCBPP has been publishing *The Commemorator* newspaper since 1990, and founded the Li'l Bobby Hutton Literacy Campaign in 2001. "CCBPP is a group of dedicated individuals who have joined together to commemorate and promulgate the goals of the Black Panther Party, its Ten-Point Platform and Program, and the theory and teachings of its co-founder and chief theoretician, Dr. Huey P. Newton."

Photo by Dave Id/Indymedia

Nadeen Elshorafa of the Bay Area Arab Resource Center.

Dickson explained that one year following the death of Dr. Newton, he and associates organized a Unity Rally in West Oakland where Huey Newton had grown up, where he had organized and where he had been murdered. This was the same neighborhood where the BPP had organized many community programs: the free breakfast program, food and clothing giveaways and sickle cell anemia testing, as well as political education and action. The Unity Rally of 1990 created the impetus to continue the struggle within the framework and goals of the Black Panther Party.

Dickson had originally landed in Oakland after being discharged there from the U.S. Navy in 1963. In late 1967, Dickson had been involved with the Free Huey movement. Shortly afterward, the Oakland headquarters put a freeze on signing up new members as the national headquarters in Oakland was under an intense attack, led by FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover. "I was what you call a 'community Panther,' and I knew that I had to officially join." Moving to Seattle to join, Dickson helped build the chapter there. The Seattle, Washington chapter had been founded by Aaron and Elmer Dixon. Dickson returned to Oakland three years later as part of a BPP mobilization of cadre to expand its base of operations in Oakland; he remained a member to the end.

CCBPP holds the belief that it is incumbent on the American people to lead the process of building succinct economic and political solutions with and on behalf of the working and oppressed people of this nation and throughout the world. That we must advance the right to justice, the right to full employment, the right to health care, the right to adequate education, the right to survive and thrive in our communities with dignity.

"We want to continue to build the legacy of the Black Panther Party. And a lot of people are seeing that's needed today, especially the young folk here. We run the Li'l Bobby Hutton Literacy Campaign and publish *The Commemorator* newspaper. I encourage you sign up to tutor in the literacy program for adults and for youth," stated Dickson, founder of CCBPP.

Contact CCBPP at (510) 652-7170 and ask how you can join as a member and volunteer to advance the cause.

All Power to the People!

Editor's note: The unexpected appearance of Bobby Seale, Black Panther Party Co-founder, was a special honor and privilege. We apologize to those who had been slated to speak, sing or recite their poems when we ran out of time for our program. Thank you for your understanding.

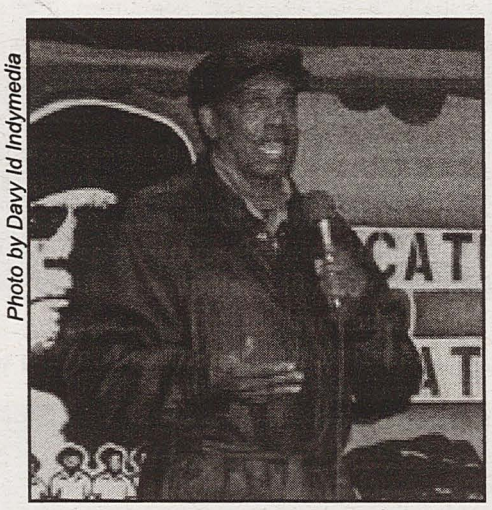
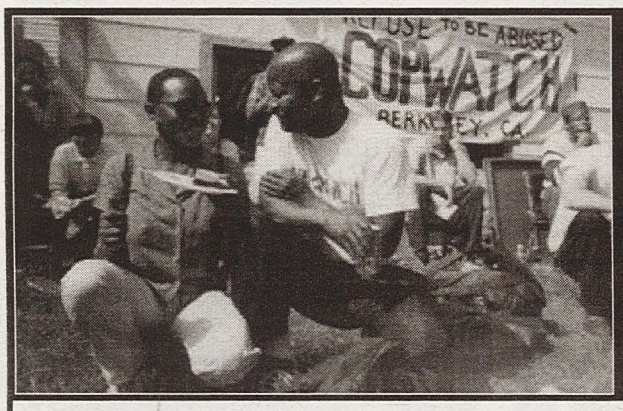


Photo by Davy Id Indymedia

James Mott a former member of 'The Lumpens' (a popular singing group of the late 1960's whose members were also BPP members).



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Mumia Case Update

Continued from page 7

return in a matter of seconds." Eyewitnesses Robert Chobert, Dessie Hightower, Veronica Jones, Deborah Kordansky, William Singletary, and Marcus Cannon all reported, at various times, that they saw one or more men run away from the scene. O'Connor writes that "some of the eyewitnesses said this man had an Afro and wore a green army jacket. Freeman did have an Afro and he perpetually wore a green army jacket. Freeman was tall and burly, weighing about 225 pounds at the time." Then there's eyewitness Robert Harkins, whom prosecutor McGill did not call as a witness. O'Connor postulates that the prosecutor's decision was because Harkins' account of a struggle between Faulkner and the shooter that caused Faulkner to fall on his hands and knees before Faulkner was shot "demolished the version of the shooting that the state's other witnesses rendered at trial." O'Connor writes further that "Harkins described the shooter as a little taller and heavier than the 6-foot, 200-pound Faulkner," which excludes the 6'1", 170-lb Abu-Jamal.

Regarding the police harassment and intimidation of Freeman, which continued after the arrest of Abu-Jamal, Washington adds: "It is significant to note that the night after the Faulkner shooting, the newsstand that Freeman built and operated at 16th and Chestnut Streets in Center City burned to the ground. In news media accounts of this arson, police sources openly boasted to reporters that the arsonist was probably a police officer. Witnesses claimed to see officers fleeing the scene right before the fire was noticed. Needless to say, that arson resulted in no arrests."

Dave Lindorff argues that the police clearly "had their eye on Freeman," because "only two months after Faulkner's shooting, Freeman was arrested in his home, where he was found hiding in his attic armed with a .22 caliber pistol, explosives and a supply of ammunition. At that time, he was not charged with anything." O'Connor and Schiffmann argue that police intimidation ultimately escalated to the point where police themselves murdered Freeman.

The morning of May 14, 1985, Freeman's body was found: naked, bound, and with a drug needle in his arm. His cause of death was officially declared a "heart attack." The date of Freeman's death is significant because the night before his body was found, the police had orchestrated a military-style siege on the MOVE organization's West Philadelphia home. Police had fired over 10,000 rounds of ammunition in 90 minutes and used a State Police helicopter to drop a C-4 bomb (illegally supplied by the FBI) on MOVE's roof, which started a fire that destroyed the entire city block. The *MOVE Commission* later documented that police had shot at MOVE family members when they tried to escape the fire: in all, six adults and five children were killed.

As a local journalist, Abu-Jamal had criticized the city government's

Continued on page 14

Honoring Li'l Bobby Hutton

Continued from page 10

Photo by Tracey Bell

Protesters gathered in downtown Oakland to demand end to police brutality.

of New Orleans, who was murdered by policemen the same day as Oscar Grant III. Shot 14 times while sitting in a car outside his grandmother's house, he had reportedly driven five hours to visit his loved one that night.

A statement to the people of Oakland and the Bay Area from Cornelius Hall, father of Jerrold Hall, an unarmed black man shot in the back by BART police officer Fred Crabtree in 1992, was read at a press conference: "Stay focused. Do not relent until justice has been served. I sit here looking at my son's skateboard, which has a sticker that reads 'SILENCE IS THE VOICE OF COMPLICITY.' You have not been silent. You have … demanded that those who work for you give you respect and JUSTICE."

Organizing true solutions, joining CCBPP

Speaking at Berkeley Community College soon after the outbursts of violent protests that occurred in Oakland, Bobby Seale, Black Panther Party co-founder, stated, "These so-called police review boards are not the name of the game…I wouldn't have rioted. When Martin Luther King died, there were 400 riots in America, which didn't solve anything." Seale advocated organizing for "structural legislation and policies to give people the power to investigate the police."

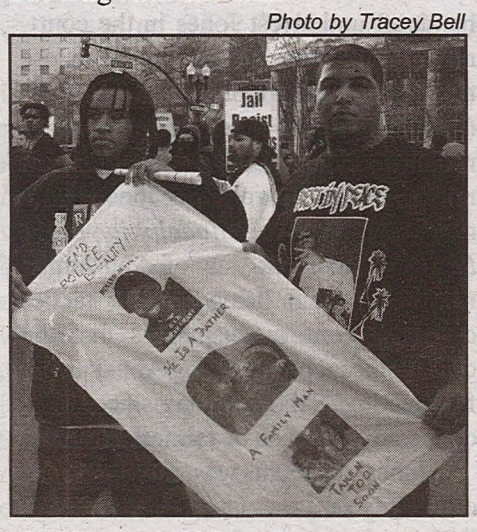
Speaking about current government policy with volunteers at the CCBPP office, Eseibio Halliday, CCBPP volunteer, said, "It doesn't take rocket science to understand that there is another agenda here: Fear tactics are being used by law enforcement institutions throughout this country. The politicians are giving the wink to their police officers that it's OK to intimidate the public from speaking out and exercising their constitutional rights.

"A lot of people understand the main problem is poverty, and that police brutality increases when poverty increases … (we must not be distracted from) the need to demand redistribution of the wealth, which is what the Black Panther Platform demands — at the same time as demanding an end to police brutality. This calls for a strategic approach to fundamentally change the system — that's people's revolution, not simply a tactical approach to patch-up the system (reform) based solely on outrage or opportunism," concluded Halliday.

The Li'l Bobby Hutton Memorial statue will stand not only for his life and the achievements of the Black Panther Party, but it will serve as a reminder that our communities need more Bobby's today — not martyrs to die for the revolution, but leaders living to lead the revolution.

CCBPP Chair Dickson added, "As the U.S. government scrambles to patch together and save the failed financial system for international monopoly capitalism, the working people of America and poor people worldwide, especially people of color, face increased economic deprivation and political repression. We must take responsibility through organizing ourselves in independent movements representing our needs and true long-term interests."

Photo by Tracey Bell



Jack and Nijar Bryson, eyewitnesses to Oscar Grant's murder, demonstrate in downtown Oakland against police brutality.

CCBPP needs volunteers for our campaigns and the fall schedule of upcoming activities, including building up the Li'l Bobby Hutton Literacy Campaign encouraging adults who have been failed by our public education system to signup for tutoring in reading and writing with study of the history of BPP and lessons of our movement, with emphasis on the BPP Ten-Point Program.

CCBPP's Li'l Bobby Hutton Literacy Campaign also provides an after-school youth tutorial program with parental or guardian participation. This program addresses a critical need of children from low-income and working class communities who do not receive basic education through the public school systems.

All Power to the People!

Leonard Peltier

Continued from page 3

imprisonment of suspected teenage terrorists, tortures, and killings in CIA prisons around the world and promoted widespread disrespect for the democratic concepts of justice upon which this country supposedly was founded. These are the same institutions that have never treated indigenous peoples with dignity or respect or accepted any responsibility for centuries of intolerance and abuse.

At his parole hearing on July 28th, Leonard Peltier expressed regret and accepted responsibility for his role in the incident in which the two FBI agents and one Native American activist died as the result of a shootout on the Pine Ridge Reservation. Mr. Peltier emphasized that the shootout occurred in circumstances where there literally was a war going on between corrupt tribal leaders, supported by the government, on the one hand, and Native American traditionalists and young activists on the other. He again denied — as he as always denied — that he intended the deaths of anyone or that he fired the fatal shots that killed the two agents, and he reminded the hearing officer that one of his former co-defendants recently admitted to having fired the fatal shots, himself.

Accordingly, it is not true that Leonard Peltier participated in "the execution style murders of two FBI agents," as the Parole Commission asserts, and there never has been credible evidence of Mr. Peltier's responsibility for the fatal shots as the FBI continues to allege.

Moreover, given the corrupt practices of the FBI, itself, it is entirely untrue that Leonard Peltier's parole at this juncture will in any way "depreciate the seriousness" of his conduct and/or "promote disrespect for the law." We will continue to seek parole and clemency for Mr. Peltier and to eventually bring this prolonged injustice to a prompt and fair resolution.

Call Canaan Federal Prison [570-488-8000] and request Leonard be treated with dignity and respect.

TOMMIE SMITH YOUTH ATHLETICS '07

Tommie Smith Youth Athletics

All Bay Area elementary and middle school students are invited to join the Tommie Smith Youth Athletics program. Girls and boys can participate in running, jumping, and throwing events and compete against other children their age from around Northern California. If your child is interested in joining the Tommie Smith Youth Athletics program, please complete the online application:

www.100blackmenba.org/youthmovement.htm

or call the office of:
100 Black Men of the Bay Area
510-763-3661
Each participant must also join the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU), and obtain medical clearance from a physician.

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Robert Estis, P.A.-C

Mumia Case Update

Continued from page 12

conflicts with MOVE, and after his 1981 arrest, MOVE began to publicly support him. Through this mutual advocacy, which continues today, Abu-Jamal and MOVE's contentious relationship with the Philadelphia authorities have always been closely linked. Seen in this context, Schiffmann argues that "if Freeman was indeed killed by cops, the killing probably was part of a general vendetta of the Philadelphia cops against their 'enemies' and the cops killed him because they knew or suspected he had something to do with the killing of Faulkner." O'Connor concurs, arguing that "the timing and modus operandi of the abduction and killing alone suggest an extreme act of police vengeance."

DA Suppresses Pedro Polakoff's Crime Scene Photos

On December 6, 2008, several hundred protesters gathered outside the Philadelphia District Attorney's office, where Pam Africa, coordinator of the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, spoke about the newly discovered crime scene photos taken by press photographer Pedro Polakoff. Africa cited Polakoff's statements today that he approached the DA's office with the photos in 1981, 1982, and 1995, but that the DA had completely ignored him. Polakoff states that because he had believed Abu-Jamal was guilty, he had no interest in approaching the defense, and never did. Consequently, neither the 1982 jury nor the defense ever saw Polakoff's photos. "The DA deliberately kept evidence out," declared Africa. "Someone should be arrested for withholding evidence in a murder trial."

The Attempts to Silence Veronica Jones

Veronica Jones was working as a prostitute at the crime scene on December 9, 1981. She first told police on December 15, 1981 that she had seen two men "jogging" away from the scene before police arrived. As a defense witness at the 1982 trial, Jones denied having made that statement; however, later in her testimony she started to describe a pre-trial visit from police, where "They were getting on me telling me I was in the area and I seen Mumia, you know, do it. They were trying to get me to say something that the other girl [Cynthia White] said. I couldn't do that." Jones then explicitly testified that police had offered to let her and White "work the area if we tell them" what they wanted to hear regarding Abu-Jamal's guilt.

At this point, Prosecutor McGill interrupted Jones and moved to block her account, calling her testimony "absolutely irrelevant." Judge Sabo agreed to block the line of questioning, strike the testimony, and then ordered the jury to disregard Jones' statement.

The DA and Sabo's efforts to silence Jones continued through to the later PCRA hearings that started in 1995. Having been unable to locate Jones earlier, the defense found Jones in 1996, and (over the DA's protests) obtained permission from the State Supreme Court to extend the PCRA hearings for Jones' testimony. Sabo vehemently resisted — arguing that there was not sufficient proof of her unavailability in 1995. However, in 1995 Sabo had refused to order disclosure of Jones' home address to the defense team.

Over Sabo's objections, the defense returned to the State Supreme Court, which ordered Sabo to conduct a full evidentiary hearing. Sabo's attempts to silence Jones continued as she took the stand. He immediately threatened her with 5-10 years imprisonment if she testified to having perjured herself in 1982. In defiance, Jones persisted with her testimony that she had in fact lied in 1982, when she had denied her original account to police that she had seen two men "leave the scene."

Jones testified that she had changed her version of events after being visited by two detectives in prison, where she was being held on charges of robbery and assault. Urging her to both finger Abu-Jamal as the shooter and to retract her statement about seeing two men "run away," the detectives stressed that she faced up to ten years in prison and the loss of her children if convicted. Jones testified in 1996 that in 1982, afraid of losing her children, she had decided to meet the police halfway: she did not actually finger Abu-Jamal, but she did lie about not seeing two men running from the scene. Accordingly, following the 1982 trial, Jones only received probation and was never imprisoned for the charges against her.

During the 1996 cross-examination, the DA announced that there was an outstanding arrest warrant for Jones on charges of writing a bad check, and that she would be arrested after concluding her testimony. With tears pouring down her face, Jones declared: "This is not going to change my testimony!" Despite objections from the defense, Sabo allowed New Jersey police to handcuff and arrest Jones in the courtroom. While the DA attempted to use this arrest to discredit Jones, her determination in the face of intimidation may, arguably, have made her testimony more credible. Outraged by Jones' treatment, even the *Philadelphia Daily News*, certainly no fan of Abu-Jamal, reported: "Such heavy-handed tactics can only confirm suspicions that the court is incapable of giving Abu-Jamal a fair hearing. Sabo has long since abandoned any pretense of fairness."

Jones' account was given further credibility a year later. At the 1997 PCRA hearing, former prostitute Pamela Jenkins testified that police had tried pressuring her to falsely testify that she saw Abu-Jamal shoot Faulkner. In addition, Jenkins testified that in late 1981, Cynthia White (whom Jenkins knew as a fellow police informant) told Jenkins that she was also being pressured to testify against Abu-Jamal, and that she was afraid for her life.

Gary Wakshul's Testimony Blocked

On the final day of testimony, Abu-Jamal's lawyer discovered Police Officer Gary Wakshul's official statement in the police report from the morning of December 9, 1981. After riding with Abu-Jamal to the hospital and guarding him until treatment for his gunshot wound, Wakshul reported: "the negro male made no comment." This statement contradicted the trial testimony of prosecution witnesses Gary Bell (a police officer) and Priscilla Durham (a hospital security guard), who testified that they had heard Abu-Jamal confess to the shooting, while Abu-Jamal was awaiting treatment at the hospital.

When the defense immediately sought to call Wakshul as a witness, the DA reported that he was on vacation. Judge Sabo denied the defense request to locate him for testimony, on grounds that it was too late in the trial to even take a short recess so that the defense could attempt to locate Wakshul. Consequently, the jury never heard from Wakshul, nor about his contradictory written report. When an outraged Abu-Jamal protested, Judge Sabo replied: "You and your attorney goofed."

Wakshul's report from December 9, 1981 is just one of the many reasons cited by Amnesty International for their conclusion that Bell's and Durham's trial testimonies were not credible. There are many other problems that merit a closer look if we are to determine how important Wakshul's 1982 trial testimony could have been.

Conclusion: the DA Still Wants to Execute

"The urgent need for a civil rights investigation is heightened because the DA is still trying to execute Mumia," emphasizes Dr. Suzanne Ross, an organizer of the campaign seeking an investigation. This past April, the U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear Abu-Jamal's appeal for a new guilt-phase trial, but the Court has yet to rule on whether to hear the appeal made simultaneously by the Philadelphia District Attorney's office, which seeks to execute Abu-Jamal without granting him a new penalty-phase trial.

In March, 2008, the Third Circuit Court affirmed Federal District Court Judge William Yohn's 2001 decision "overturning" the death sentence. Citing the 1988 *Mills v. Maryland* precedent, Yohn had ruled that sentencing forms used by jurors and Judge Albert Sabo's instructions to the jury were potentially confusing, and that therefore jurors could have mistakenly believed that they had to unanimously agree on any mitigating circumstances in order to consider them as weighing against a death sentence. According to the 2001 ruling, affirmed in 2008, if the DA wants to re-instate the death sentence, the DA must call for a new penalty-phase jury trial. In such a penalty hearing, new evidence of Abu-Jamal's innocence could be presented, but the jury could only choose between execution and a life sentence without parole.

The DA is appealing to the U.S. Supreme Court against this 2008 affirmation of Yohn's ruling. If the court rules in the DA's favor, Abu-Jamal can

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be executed without benefit of a new sentencing hearing. If the U.S. Supreme Court rules against the DA's appeal, the DA must either accept the life sentence for Abu-Jamal, or call for the new sentencing hearing. Meanwhile, Mumia Abu-Jamal has never left his death row cell.

How You Can Help

Actions were being organized throughout the summer to support the campaign for a federal civil rights investigation (including at the NAACP convention in New York City, July 11-16 — organizers focused particularly on July 13, the day that Attorney General Holder was scheduled to address the convention). Supporters then assembled in Washington, D.C., on July 22, to lobby their elected officials. In mid-September, they return to Washington, D.C., for a major press conference.

For more information on how you can support the campaign for a federal civil rights investigation, and to sign the online letter and petition to Attorney General Holder, please visit: http://free-mumia.com/civilrights.html.

—This article was first published in full by SF Bay View Newspaper *on June 16, 2009.*

—Hans Bennett is an independent multi-media journalist (www.insubordination.blogspot.com) and co-founder of Journalists for Mumia Abu-Jamal *(www.Abu-Jamal-News.com).*

Born and raised in the SF Bay Area, Bennett has been researching Abu-Jamal's case for over ten years, and lived in Philadelphia for seven years, documenting the movement to free Mumia and all political prisoners from the frontlines of the struggle.

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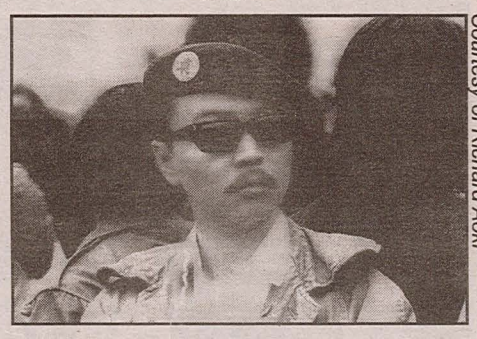
Capitalism Cannot Be Reformed!

Richard Aoki Remembered

Continued from page 11



Courtesy of Richard Aoki

Richard Aoki was a BPP Field Marshal and co-founded UCB Third World Liberation organization that was instrumental in the student strike for ethnic studies.

enrolled at UC Berkeley and went on to co-found the Third World Liberation Front, the student group that was partly responsible for starting the ethnic studies departments across the country."

Richard was highly regarded by young student activists in the Bay Area up to the time of his death, well known for his stance against all forms of racism, exploitation and oppression. In 1999, the UCB Ethnic Studies program came under attack from the University of California Board of Regents who had announced their intent to eliminate ethnic studies courses. Richard returned to UCB upon request of student activists; he took a leading role in assisting them to fight for the ethnic studies program – the student organized strike action stopped the Regents' threat.

Longtime friend, Tom Sanders, who first met Aoki in the 1960s, reflected on Richard's life. "He saw racism and segregation as the American version of the Dark Ages… Richard always felt that the oppressed of all ethnic groups should work together on common problems." Sanders recalled how Aoki would use duplicator equipment to print flyers for a Palestinian organization and for other struggling groups as well as for his own organization's projects.

"Richard Aoki, along with the other original founders of the Black Panther Party, made a conscious choice of courage, risk, sacrifice and service," Sanders said. "Throughout his life, Comrade Aoki was always faithful to his principles… Richard had no children…nevertheless, Richard broadened his family many years ago by serving the people to this day," added Sanders. "Richard left

Photo by Andre Nguyen

Former classmates, longtime friends, William Dere and Bryant Fong, perform Tai Chi.

behind comrades from around the world that will stand on Richard's legacy and build a future by seizing the time."

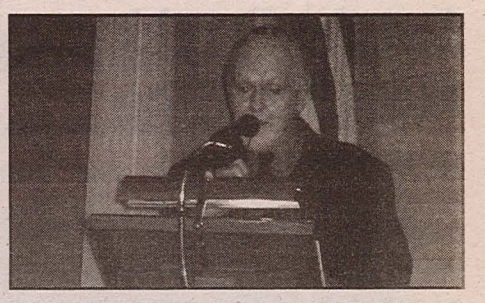
Over the last ten years, Richard helped circulate The Commemorator through his own large periphery of friends and associates. If Richard did not receive his copies of The Commemorator he would come to the CCBPP office to find out what was going on and get his supply. Richard actively supported CCBPP's Li'l Bobby Hutton Literacy Campaign and spoke at most of the events in support of the Campaign over the years since the program began.

When Richard addressed a CCBPP Open House Celebration in 2006, he admonished all to step forward and build much needed unity and strength through organization now. "There is nothing on the scene today, internationally, or domestically, that inspired generations and cut across community divisions in the way our movement did in the 60s and the early 70s," he said.

On August 4, 2007, CCBPP co-sponsored a Li'l Bobby Hutton Award Dinner along with Family and Friends of Li'l Bobby Hutton, at which Richard Aoki was honored with a Li'l Bobby Hutton Certificate of Appreciation.

Richard is sorely missed but will live on in our memories and history as a revolutionary comrade and fighter for the people.

All Power to the People!



Tom Sanders, an old friend and comrade since early 1960s.

Photo by Andre Nguyen

Erin Pangilinan (Ethnic Studies, undergraduate).

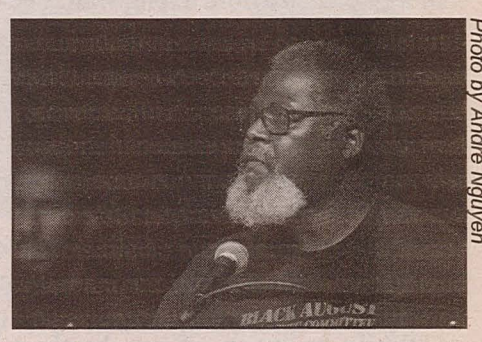


Photo by Andre Nguyen

Shaka At-Thinnin (Black August), a friend of Richard's.

Courtesy of Richard Aoki

Richard age 4 with brother David, age 3, in a concentration camp in Topaz, Utah.

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Let the President Heed Dr. King

Continued from page 2

manufacturing — but the control of those funds, and how they are allocated, is not in our hands; they have not begun to serve the interests of the people of this country.

We ask: What about the majority of African Americans and other financially battered groupings, including the over 760,000 more Americans who, per official statistics, lost their jobs in 2008 and the over five million more —so far — who have lost jobs in 2009?!

Yes, the 2008 presidential election showed our people DO want a change … and we need that change now. The majority cannot afford a long wait. The question is how, and in what manner, will the new administration HEED THAT NEED?

There is a mighty status quo that has fought to stop millions of workers from attaining a living wage, at the same time as they oppress our racial minorities. The still-new President has much to confront.

While so many of our brothers and sisters have been amazed and jubilant at the breaking of the color barrier at the White House, we know that we must persist in bringing about the ways and means to determine our own destinies as working people, and this requires vigilance and continuing to build our voice in how our country is ruled.

It is important to keep in mind that despite the U.S. economy tanking, President Obama has still not spoken on behalf of the poor and low-income community — he has addressed the "middle class" repeatedly.

Neither has he denounced the Bush administration looting the $700 billion on behalf of Wall Street… there was no material disagreement from him or McCain. As a matter of fact, both endorsed it.

The BLACK PANTHER TEN-POINT PROGRAM and PLATFORM continues as our guide to answer: "where to go from here" — it lays out basic principles and goals for what the masses of people need, today, not just the so-called middle class, but all working, poor and oppressed Americans.

We hope President Obama will now heed what the people are asking for and be responsive to it… but we must not simply wait.

The Ten-Point Program is urgently needed NOW. The working class community has been under attack for a good while, and yet more closings of public schools, libraries and health clinics hit our people the hardest. We have needed a "bailout" for a very long time! But more, we need a sustainable economy, a process through which all working people can progress by the dint of our labor, and when we cannot labor, the society will guarantee a civilized, sane, ethical, responsible approach to caring for our people.

We must do away with the policies that are determined in the absence of working class ethics, and, in fact, promulgate the hatred and racialism that allowed the people of New Orleans and the Gulf States to perish and suffer during and in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. The bottom line is: money talks.

We must take those needs of the people to the people on our door-to-door canvasses and through our newspaper, *THE COMMEMORATOR*.

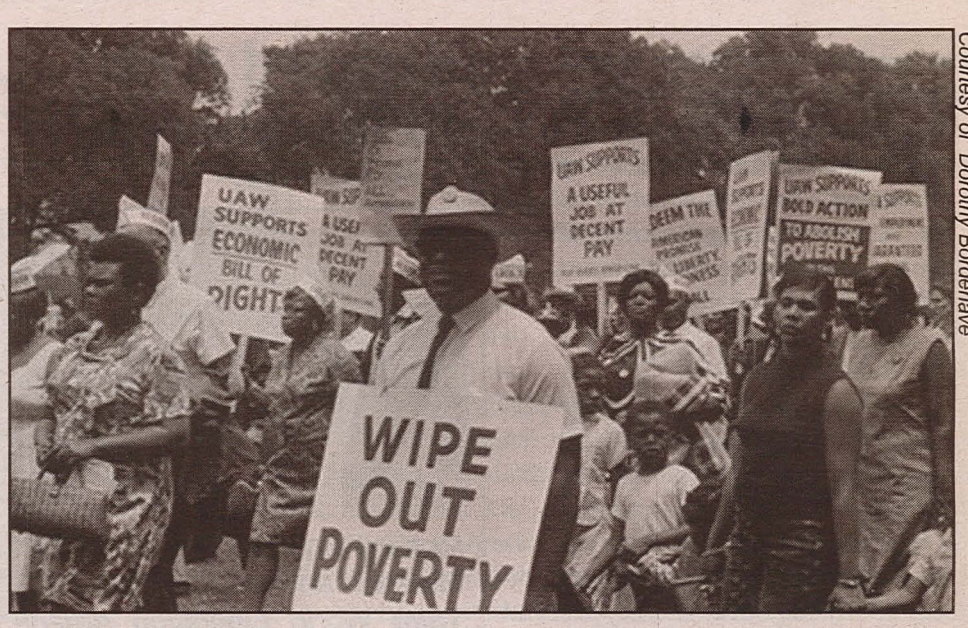
We must call for full employment at parity pay for our people, as the job cuts continue to increase

We call for an end to the robbery of our black, poor, working class and all oppressed communities. What else can we call it when over $2 trillion of our tax money is used to prop up private financial speculators, while health care is increasingly denied the uninsured?

When Congress voted for the $700 billion bailout package of the financial industry last fall, it was against the overwhelming majority of the opinions expressed by the constituents who telephoned and e-mailed in record numbers, but both candidates supported it anyway.

The time is now to heed the voice of the people

We need decent housing, fit for the shelter of human beings. There is a growing amount of housing sitting abandoned while people resort to pilfering the copper pipes and wires to salvage for cash so they can survive from day-to-day because working people can't pay the 35% mortgage rates. More and more people are now living out of their cars and in tents in encampments throughout the country.



Courtesy of Dorothy Bordenave

In 1968, the Poor People's Campaign witnessed a surge in demands to abolish poverty voiced by unions, such as United Auto Workers, church groups and community organizations.

We want education for our people. The result of the federal bailout is that there is even less funding for our children's education; California has a $24 billion deficit and many municipalities are bankrupt.

We want free health care for all black and oppressed people. We need our tax dollars going to health care, not insurance company profits.

We want an immediate end to police brutality and murder of Black people. The largest portion of those incarcerated continues to be African American.

We want an immediate end to all wars of aggression. Now that U.S. policy has succeeded in securing contracts for Exxon Mobil in Iraq, they have issued a call to march our troops into Afghanistan to further expand U.S. control of foreign resources. The U.S. right now has been raiding Syria and Pakistan and the Pakistani and Syrian governments are protesting. Latin American nations that have been standing up for true sovereignty from the IMF and the World Bank are under attack. We need true peace, not a government that uses military might and the pretext of national security to loot resources belonging to oppressed peoples of other lands.

We want trials by their peers for all black and poor oppressed people and for our country's political prisoners held in prisons and jails.

We want land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice, peace and people's community control of modern technology.

We acknowledge President Obama's historical achievement for the African American people, and we see that it was the dire need for immediate relief from the conditions the majority of us face that got President Obama into office.

President Obama needs to listen to Dr. King on the profit system of capitalism; Martin Luther King, Jr. came to realize that capitalism itself is a losing proposition — the system has outlived its time and is a "no win" for the vast majority of American people.

We need a living income for everyone in the United States and to remove the oppressive trade policies against developing nations of the world.

We do believe, as Dr. King pointed out over 40 years ago, that a guaranteed living wage would reverse the greatest strife in our land.

We need government — in the U.S. and internationally — that represents the interests of those who labor or cannot work due to disability or age.

The people need living wage jobs, foreclosure and credit relief, free and low-cost health care and education funding now.

We must organize for those — our Ten Points — now, expanding our independent voice.

We call for you to join us! Call CCBPP at (510) 652-7170.

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Poverty + Unemployment = Increasing Violence in Our Streets

WE WANT AN IMMEDIATE END TO POLICE BRUTALITY AND MURDER OF BLACK PEOPLE, OTHER PEOPLE OF COLOR, ALL OPPRESSED PEOPLE INSIDE THE UNITED STATES.

— Point 7, Black Panther Party Ten-Point Program

The United States is at a turning point. The desperation created by the highest levels of poverty and exploitation experienced by the American people since the Great Depression gives rise to the fear of increased levels of oppression.

There already has been tragedy after tragedy, not only the massive unemployment, school closings, evictions and foreclosures that millions are facing, but also the tragedies of the shooting rampages in schools, churches, nursing homes, shopping malls and homes.

And we've seen an increase in police shootings of low-income people of color on the streets of our communities in cities across the country. Money continues to be poured into the hands of the already wealthy and sucked out of the pockets of working people. As mainstream media perpetrates the distraction and lies about the issues that affect us most — the economy, jobs, how the majority of us will gain economic stability — tragedies continue to develop and wreak havoc in our lives. We must end poverty and its root cause, monopoly capitalism.

We know from our history that law enforcement in the United States has been used primarily to aid the capitalist class to oppress, exploit, brutalize, and profit from the labor of working people. We know what the system has done to us, day after day.

Here we do not refer to the individual police officers: it is a system that must be replaced.

For Blacks who were forcibly brought in slave ships from Africa and indigenous native people who where massacred and enslaved by European colonialists, the genesis of police in the United States begins as slave catchers and enforcers of unequal treaties, and later on, as strike breakers, evictors of those who could not pay their rent, bill collectors, late-night home raiders and brutal abusers of people of poverty and color.

It has been refined over the years, to be sure, to the point that there is a black president and racial, ethnic and gender diversity within the ranks of the police, yet their primary service is to the status quo — keeping capital in the hands of the rich and powerful and keeping poor people divided against one another.

The violence in our poor communities is intentional policy — a necessary part of what the system of capitalism needs to continue to stay in power. On an international level, capitalism requires war as a tool to garner raw resources, cheap labor and new markets. The color of the enforcers does not change the real politic.

Poor people cannot afford bail and most often cannot afford legal counsel, research, professional witnesses and the like, and instead end up on the inside as part of a slave labor force within prison enterprises.

Poverty in a world of plenty is a form of violence that we — and our brothers and sisters in developing nations around the world — live under every day.

We need to organize and dedicate ourselves to putting an end to poverty in our communities through advancing the BPP Ten-Point Program. Bring an end to the violence that the capitalist system produces — only an end to poverty will make an end of this violence possible.

All Power to the People!

Archives

Continued from page 4

Israel. "Oil is our main weapon against imperialism," Arafat said. An Arab oil boycott of the U.S. would have serious economic repercussions in this country and could exert the pressure necessary to bring peace in the Middle East.

In an appeal for peace to the United Nations, Arafat said: "...When we speak of our common hopes for the Palestine of tomorrow we include all Jews now living in Palestine who choose to live with us there in peace and without discrimination.... I call upon Jews to turn away from the illusory promises made to them by Zionist ideology and Israeli leadership. Those offer Jews perpetual bloodshed, endless bloodshed.... We invite them to emerge from their moral isolation into a more open realm of free choice....

"We do not wish the shedding of one drop of either Arab or Jewish blood; neither do we delight in the continuation of killing which would end once a just peace, based on our people's rights, hopes and aspirations is finally established."

All Power to the People!

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AIDS in Africa: New Plague or Old Illnesses of Poverty?

Racist HIV Myth Hides Ruthless U.S. Exploitation.

Unlike in the United States, AIDS in Africa is most frequently diagnosed based on four very imprecise clinical symptoms—diarrhea, fever, persistent cough, and weight loss greater than 10% over two months. *HIV antibody tests are not required to diagnose a case of African AIDS.* These four clinical symptoms are identical to the problems created by conditions of poverty that have troubled Africa and other developing areas of the world for centuries. In fact, symptoms of the so-called African AIDS epidemic are indistinguishable from the effects of malnutrition, unsanitary drinking and bathing water, and common curable conditions like malaria, cholera, tuberculosis, and parasitic infections.

Rather than solve the problems of African poverty caused by centuries of ruthless Western exploitation, the U.S. government insists on broadcasting the doomsday notion that Africa is suddenly gripped by a deadly, spreading sexual plague. According to these American health authorities, salvation from sickness can only be found in profitable pills manufactured by the white West and exported to black Africa.

America's Racist HIV Myth

The idea that AIDS originated in Africa is a popular myth without any scientific or epidemiological evidence. News reports that blame AIDS on African green monkeys are based upon elaborate speculation about species-jumping viruses rather than reliable proof. Tall tales about the spread of AIDS are promoted through the most vulgar and racist sexual stereotypes about promiscuous African people.

Still, the numbers speak for themselves. According to the 1999 *WHO Global HIV/AIDS Report,* the total number of AIDS cases in Africa virtually equals the total number of cases in America even though Africa, with its 650 million citizens, has more than two times the population of the United States. Africa is often cited as a worst case example of what could happen in America despite figures demonstrating that 99.5% of Africans do not have AIDS, and among Africans who test HIV positive, 97% do not have AIDS.

The Truth About African AIDS:

- **HIV antibody tests are not required for an AIDS diagnosis in Africa.**
- **African AIDS is diagnosed by four very imprecise clinical symptoms:**
  - **— Diarrhea**
  - **— Fever**
  - **— Persistent cough**
  - **— Weight loss greater than 10% over two months**
- **Tuberculosis, malaria, and measles far outnumber cases of AIDS in Africa.**
- **AIDS is not the leading cause of illness or death in any African nation.**

While Africa is the frequent target of damaging AIDS media reports, the total number of cases on the continent is relatively small. For example, from 1981 through 1999 cumulative AIDS cases for South Africa, the area claimed hardest hit by HIV, were just 12,825.

Exporting Extermination: AIDS Pills Kill!

It is undeniable that experimental AIDS treatments like protease inhibitors and AZT are all highly toxic, dangerous products. Strokes, muscle wasting, anemia, physical deformities, dementia, birth defects, organ failure, and death are some of the "side effects" of these poisons. Thousands of gay men in the 1980s and 1990s died from AZT poisoning. Now the U.S. State Department has elevated AIDS to the level of a threat to national security in order to gain public support for exporting AZT to pregnant African women. Outspoken leaders like South African President Thabo Mbeki—hard pressed to explain why developing nations stricken with famine and civil chaos should spend what little money they have on toxic anti-HIV drugs while millions starve—are relentlessly attacked as unfit and crazy by racist Western media outlets.

We invite you to investigate the growing international controversy over the cause and treatment of AIDS for yourself. Clip and mail the coupon below for a free copy of the groundbreaking book *What If Everything You Thought You Knew About AIDS Was Wrong?* by AIDS survivor Christine Maggiore.

Fight the AID$ Fraud!

ACT UP San Francisco is the AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power—a militant, direct action organization committed to ending the AIDS fraud. General body meetings are held every Monday night at 7:30 p.m. at 1884 Market Street and our medical marijuana dispensary is open 12:00 to 7:00 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday. Get involved. Join ACT UP! End the abuse of AIDS.

Clip and mail the coupon below to receive a free copy of the book *What If Everything You Thought You Knew About AIDS Was Wrong?* or contact us for more information at www.actupsf.com!

clip here

ACT UP
SAN FRANCISCO

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Mail to: ACT UP • 1884 Market Street • San Francisco, CA 94102 • (415) 864-6686 • www.actupsf.com • actupsf@aol.com

CCBPP STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Commemoration Committee for the Black Panther Party (CCBPP) is committed to the goals of the Black Panther Party (BPP) as outlined in its Ten-Point Program which was written in 1966 by Party founders Dr. Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale.

The Ten-Point Program outlines goals and objectives toward changing conditions of economic exploitation and political oppression in all low-income and working class communities in the U.S. and elsewhere, as the basis for unity and solidarity.

Also, the CCBPP is committed to the concept of Revolutionary Intercommunalism, introduced by Dr. Newton in 1970 at Boston College. Our Revolutionary Intercommunalism holds that there are basically two sides. On one side there is reactionary intercommunalism which presently holds the world's low-income and working communities under conditions of economic exploitation and political oppression by controlling the wealth, resources and institutions in order to maximize profits for the few. Huey identified this side as the leading reactionary side (the ruling class) which consists of a minority, fewer than five percent of the world population. Under these conditions, reactionary intercommunalism, by and large, keeps the poor and working communities on a cycle of degradation, under conditions of reaction, desperation and poverty, with no end in sight. Newton understood that in order to change these conditions and advance the economic and cultural interests of these oppressed communities of the world, disciplined organizations must be built from the bottom up, enabling these low-income and working communities to fight exploitation and oppression by any means necessary (this fight needs to start in the advanced industrialized U.S. because our nation leads the world in political reaction and economic exploitation). CCBPP advances and upholds the goals which the BPP outlined in its Ten-Point Program, and those goals are about ridding black ghettos and low-income and working communities of economic exploitation and political oppression, understanding that we can reach these goals only by seizing the time at the point of practice.

Black Panther Party Ten-Point Program

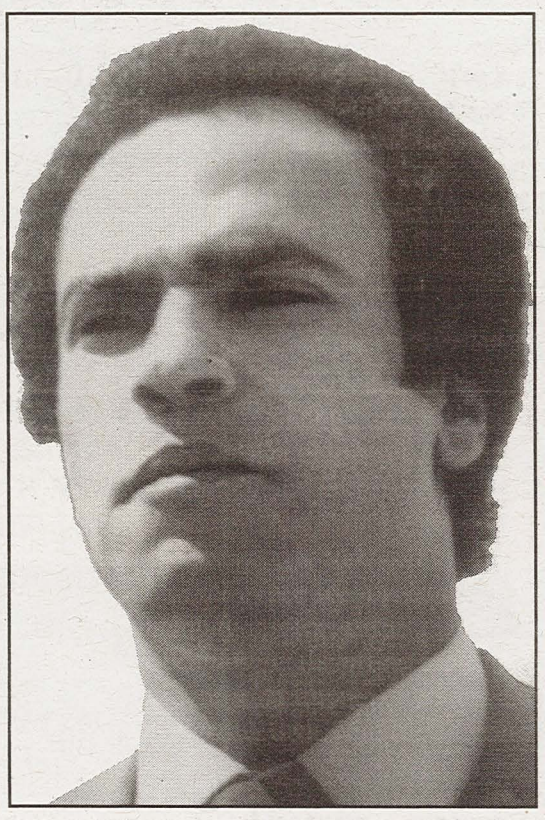
WHAT WE WANT, WHAT WE BELIEVE

1. WE WANT FREEDOM, WE WANT POWER TO DETERMINE THE DESTINY OF OUR BLACK AND OPPRESSED COMMUNITIES. We believe that Black and oppressed people will not be free until we are able to determine our destinies in our own communities ourselves, by fully controlling all the institutions that exist in our communities.

2. WE WANT FULL EMPLOYMENT FOR OUR PEOPLE. We believe that the federal government is responsible and obligated to give every person employment or a guaranteed income. We believe that if the American businessmen will not give full employment, then the technology and means of production should be taken from the businessmen and placed in the community so that the people of the community can organize and employ all its people and give a high standard of living.

3. WE WANT AN END TO THE ROBBERY BY THE CAPITALIST OF OUR BLACK AND OPPRESSED COMMUNITIES. We believe that the racist government has robbed us and now we are demanding the overdue debt of forty acres and two mules. Forty acres and two mules were promised 100 years ago as restitution for slave labor and mass murder of Black people. We will accept the payment in currency that will be distributed to our many communities. The American racist has taken part in the slaughter of over fifty million Black people. Therefore, we feel this is a modest demand that we make.

4. WE WANT DECENT HOUSING, FIT FOR THE SHELTER OF HUMAN BEINGS. We believe that if the landlords will not give decent housing to our Black and oppressed communities, then housing and the land should be made into cooperatives so that the people in our communities, with government aid, can build and make decent housing for the people.



Black Panther Founder, Dr. Huey P. Newton

5. WE WANT EDUCATION FOR OUR PEOPLE THAT EXPOSES THE TRUE NATURE OF THIS DECADENT AMERICAN SOCIETY. WE WANT EDUCATION THAT TEACHES US OUR TRUE HISTORY AND OUR ROLE IN THE PRESENT-DAY SOCIETY. We believe in an educational system that will give to our people a knowledge of self. If you do not have knowledge of yourself and your position in the society and the world, then you will have little chance to know anything else.

6. WE WANT COMPLETELY FREE HEALTH CARE FOR ALL BLACK AND OPPRESSED PEOPLE. We believe that the government must provide, free of charge, for the people, health facilities that will not only treat our illnesses, most of which have come about as a result of our oppression, but will also develop preventive medical programs to guarantee our future survival. We believe that mass health education and research programs must be developed to give all Black and oppressed people access to advanced scientific and medical information, so we may provide ourselves with proper medical attention and care.

7. WE WANT AN IMMEDIATE END TO POLICE BRUTALITY AND MURDER OF BLACK PEOPLE, OTHER PEOPLE OF COLOR, ALL OPPRESSED PEOPLE INSIDE THE UNITED STATES. We believe that the racist and fascist government of the United States uses its domestic enforcement agencies to carry out its program of oppression against Black people, other people of color, and poor people inside the United States. We believe it is our right, therefore, to defend ourselves against such armed forces and that all Black and oppressed people should be armed for self-defense of our homes and communities against these fascist police forces.

8. WE WANT AN IMMEDIATE END TO ALL WARS OF AGGRESSION. We believe that the various conflicts which exist around the world stem directly from the aggressive desires of the U. S. ruling circle and government to force its domination upon the oppressed people of the world. We believe that if the U. S. government or its lackeys do not cease these aggressive wars that it is the right of the people to defend themselves by any means necessary against their aggressors.

9. WE WANT FREEDOM FOR ALL BLACK AND POOR OPPRESSED PEOPLE NOW HELD IN U. S. FEDERAL, STATE, COUNTY, CITY, AND MILITARY PRISONS AND JAILS. WE WANT TRIALS BY A JURY OF PEERS FOR ALL PERSONS ARE CHARGED WITH SO-CALLED CRIMES UNDER THE LAWS OF THIS COUNTRY. We believe that the many Black and poor oppressed people now held in U. S. prisons and jails have not received fair and impartial trials under a racist and fascist judicial system and should be free from incarceration. We believe in the ultimate elimination of all wretched, inhuman penal institutions, because the masses of men and women imprisoned inside the United States or by the U. S. military are the victims of oppressive conditions that are the real cause of their imprisonment. We believe that when persons brought to trial that they must be guaranteed, by the United States, juries of their peers, attorneys of their choice and freedom from imprisonment while awaiting trials.

10. WE WANT LAND, BREAD, HOUSING, EDUCATION, CLOTHING, JUSTICE, PEACE AND PEOPLE'S COMMUNITY CONTROL OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY. When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that, whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to affect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and, accordingly, all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But, when a long train of abuses and usurpation, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism. It is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security.

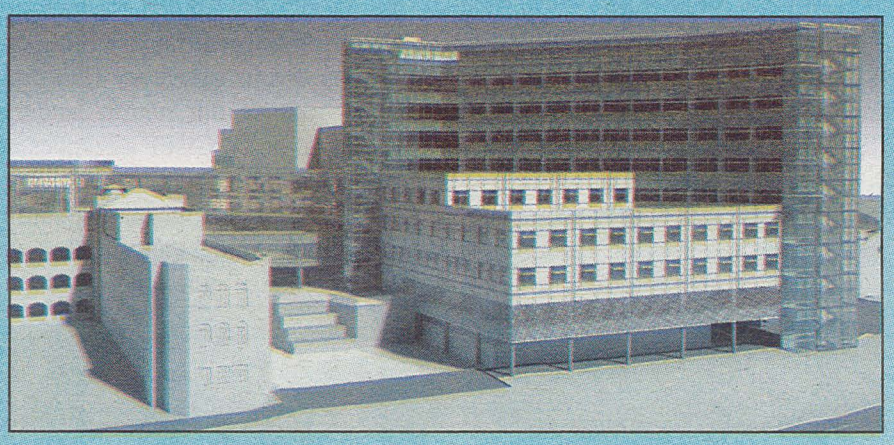
ALAMEDA COUNTY RESIDENTS MUST STAND UNITED ON HOW OUR TAX-DOLLARS ARE USED: CONTRACT & HIRE LOCALLY WITH PREVAILING WAGE!

"WE WANT FULL EMPLOYMENT FOR OUR PEOPLE"

(Point # 2, Black Panther Party Ten Point Program, OCTOBER 1966)

To Alameda County residents:

Recently, it has come to light that Alameda County General Services Agency (GSA) has published a "Notice of Intent" to award a $434,000,000 design-build contract to Clark Construction for the Highland Hospital Acute Tower Replacement Project. It is to be noted that Clark Construction has no track record in Alameda County, especially as related to the utilization of local small businesses and local labor. They do not have a track record of providing support services for the betterment of the residents of this community. They do not have a track record, in Alameda County, of hiring the difficult to employ or supporting "Full Employment For Our People". This in itself may not appear to be such an insult to the local community until you consider the fact that our local leaders have asked Prime Contractors to demonstrate past performances and execute plans that includes our community. This invites positive competition on the part of large contractors who wish to perform in Alameda County. Redwood Resources, a local woman-owned small business has met the challenge and has a track record of supporting business and job development on Alameda County construction projects through services provided to Hensel Phelps Construction Co. on the Alameda County Juvenile Justice Center Project (an award winning project completed in 2007) in San Leandro, and other significant projects in the City of Oakland. Hensel Phelps also proposed to build the Highland Hospital Acute Tower. They demonstrated support for our community on the renovation of the historic Merritt College campus on MLK Jr. Way. It is important to recognize and note when contractors and consultants are engaged in positive community development through their outreach programs. Redwood Resources provided leadership by locating, training small independent local sub-contractors, and providing them with the business tools necessary to strengthen and grow their businesses. Redwood Resources increased the hiring of local residents and provided access to training for retention.



The Alameda County Highland Hospital is projected to be completed by 2011.

"We Need Full Employment"

Redwood Resources, with the support of the prime contractor, has continued its support of contractors, workers, youth and seniors in our community for the past two years without receiving public money for their efforts. No wonder many large contractors pay no attention to the calls for their support of the local community. They build and they leave; and why not? The GSA has given lip service to community development on one hand and stiffed the provider on the other. According to Raoul Fulcher, a local black contractor, "They gave no true weight to the Community Outreach Service provided by Redwood Resources' effective small local business development programs. The County must weigh the track records of both companies on their merits, on outreach to the community and follow the model that has been demonstrated by Redwood Resources."

By William Frazier (Alameda County resident)

We urge the citizens of Alameda County and members of the Alameda County Board of Supervisors to reconsider GSA's Notice of Intent to award Clark Construction the $434 million contract with its questionable track record.

PLEASE CALL ALAMEDA COUNTY SUPERVISORS:

SCOTT HAGGERTY:	**District ONE:**	**510-272-6691**
GAIL STEELE:	**District TWO:**	**510-272-6692**
ALICE LAI-BITKER:	**District THREE:**	**510-272-6693**
NATE MILEY:	**District: FOUR:**	**510-272-6694**
KEITH CARSON:	**District FIVE:**	**510-272-6695**

This page is sponsored by Redwood Resources

Community **A**ction for a **R**enewed **E**nvironment is an EPA & Grant Program **(CARE)**

* Street improvement
* Quiet Time
* Healthy Air/
Ordinance Compliance

1747 14th Street
Oakland,CA 94607
510-257-5640

July 11, 2009 marked the 1st Annual Neighborhood block party at West Oakland's Willow Park. West Oakland's Margaret Gordon, seated front with volunteer staff members, and community activist Ora Knowell, standing.

Healthy Oakland

A Project of Healthy Communities, Inc.
"Saving Lives"

Contact Us for Food Stamp Enrollment!

We Are Here to Assist
You With Your Medical Needs
At Our State Licensed Clinic!

Monday – Friday (9 am – 1 pm)
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Men & Women
18 Years Old & Older

2580 San Pablo Avenue
(Cross Street is 26th Street)
Oakland, CA 94612

Family Resource Center – (510) 444-9655
Save A Life Wellness Center – (510) 444-9155

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InterPlay Celebrates 20 Years
InterPlay is an active creative way to unlock the wisdom of your body. Come for connection, exploration, transformation and play! Our building is at the former location of the New Lamppost Lounge at 23rd & Telegraph.
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www.interplay.org

VOLUNTEER AT THE 43RD ANNIVERSARY OF THE BLACK PANTHER PARTY!
Call 510-652-7170 TODAY! itsabouttimebpp.com